Teacher Perceptions of Principal Leadership Behavior and Shared Decision Making in Select Southeast Georgia Secondary Schools

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Lacey Lamb Wynn

Ed.S., Valdosta State University, 2014
M.Ed., Valdosta State University, 2012
B.A. Valdosta State University, 2000

This dissertation, "Teacher Perceptions of Principal Leadership Behavior and Shared Decision Making in Select Southeast Georgia Secondary Schools," by Lacey Lamb Wynn, is approved by:

Dissertation Committee Chair and Research Member

Donald W. Leech, Ed.D.
Professor of Leadership, Technology, and Workforce Development

Committee Members

Gerald R. Siggins, Ed.D.
Professor Emeritus of Leadership, Technology, and Workforce Development

James Martinez, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Teacher Education

Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Research

Becky K. da Cruz, Ph.D., J.D.
Professor of Criminal Justice

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ABSTRACT

Research indicates today's schools are different from those in the past. The traditional view of school leadership is not the mindset in today's educational institutions. Principals are no longer the sole decision makers regarding what takes place in the schools. With increasing levels of accountability, there is a greater need for collaboration and shared decision making. The purpose of this correlational study was to examine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behavior and the level of shared decision making practiced in their schools. This study sought to answer the following overarching research question: "To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in selected Southeast Georgia schools as perceived by teachers?" Data were collected from secondary school teachers throughout Southeast Georgia using the Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer and the Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised. Results indicated the highest leader practices identified to be encourage the heart and inspire a shared vision. The highest shared decision making dimension was pupil personnel services, followed closely by curriculum and instruction. Though very little relationship was found between leader behaviors and shared decision making as perceived by teachers, results from this study may be useful to principals who are considering shared decision making opportunities for their faculties.

Key words: Teacher perceptions, principal leadership, behavior and shared decision making, symbolic interaction, Georgia secondary schools

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DEDICATION

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

> Leadership is much more of an art, a belief, a condition of the heart, than a set of things to do. The visible signs of artful leadership are expressed ultimately in its practice. Max DePree (*Leadership is an Art*, 1987)

The view of leadership has traditionally been that one person, or team, held a position of authority while others submissively followed, and that leader, or team, was vital to the success of that organization (Baker, 2007; Helms, 2012). There was no relationship between the leader of the organization and its followers; the followers were simply expected to comply with what the leader expected. The success or failure of that organization was the sole responsibility of that leader. Through the works of Freud, Fromm, Erickson, Mead, and Sanford, psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists began to identify and examine the leader/follower relationship and the benefits it brings (Bargal & Schmid, 1989; Hollander, 1992; Hollander & Offermann, 1990). The traditional view is not the mindset in today's educational institutions (Bellamy, Fulmer, Murphy, & Muth, 2007; Razik & Swanson, 2010). Due to complex and ever-changing expectations, principals must be able to move about skillfully and delicately through the balances of their responsibilities and the realities of education: meeting high-stakes testing demands, ensuring learning and achievement of all students, closing the learning gaps in various groups, having knowledge and understanding of government rules and regulations, and adapting to societal changes.

No longer are principals the sole decision makers in schools; effective schools allow for a collaborative effort among learning communities, grade-level teams, committees, departments, districts, stakeholders, and local, state, and national organizations to name just a few (DuFour, 2004; Kellough & Hill, 2015). The roles, responsibilities, and expectations of current school principals have taken a drastic change over the last several decades (Goldring & Greenfield, 2005; Tirozzi, 2001). The leader must be able to juggle numerous jobs at once: a disciplinarian, a building manager, a budget analyst, a curricula expert, an assessment analyst, a visionary, a cheerleader, a role model, a counselor, and an administrator of everyday life in the school (Clifford, Behrstock-Sherratt, & Fetters, 2012; Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005; Murphy, Elliott, Goldring, & Porter, 2006; Ubben, Hughes, & Norris, 2001). The success of any school is reliant upon the strength of its principals and leadership team (Sarros & Sarros, 2007). The increased level of accountability has become a concern and cause of anxiety for principals and teachers alike (Fullan, 2010). With changes in leadership roles, the need for collaboration and shared decision making is increasing (Kleine-Kracht, 1993). As described by Stagnaro and Piotrowski (2014), effective teams working together through collaboration will allow for individuals to come together to "lead one another to higher achievement levels" (p. 4). It is imperative that principals develop a high level of trust among the faculty of their school to meet the ever-changing expectations (Nguni, Sleegers, & Denessen, 2006; Sarros & Sarros, 2007).

Differences in decision making opportunities along with varying perceptions of leader behavior negatively impact education in today's schools (Conway & Calzi, 1995). One possible cause for these differences is the principal's understanding of and

preparation for developing learning organizations that foster collaborative decision making environments (Ejimabo, 2015). Since demands, roles, and responsibilities of principals have changed, traditional educational programs are no longer adequately preparing leaders to meet the challenges and expectations to today's schools. (Elmore, 2000; Levine, 2005). A second possible cause is the willingness of the teachers to participate in shared decision making opportunities (Smylie, 1992). A third possible cause is principal willingness to effectively involve teachers in the decision making process within the schools to increase educational outcomes within the schools (Conway & Calzi, 1996).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this correlational study was to determine if a relationship exists between teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behavior and the level of shared decision making practiced in selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools. This study adds to the literature available regarding leadership behaviors. It also adds to the literature regarding the implementation of shared decision making in schools.

For this study, five leader behaviors or practices were correlated with eleven levels or dimensions of shared decision making. The five leader behaviors or practices were defined by utilizing Kouzes and Posner's (1997) exemplary leadership practices. Shared decision making was defined through Ferrara (1994) Shared Education Decision Making Survey-Revised.

The results of this study may help prepare future school leaders in promoting and implementing teacher participation in shared decision making opportunities. To date, there has not been a study that has examined perceived leader behavior and shared

decision making in Southeast Georgia. Research in this area may not only add to the existing body of literature regarding perception of principal leadership behavior and shared decision making but could be a catalyst for academic and social change across Southeast Georgia.

The scope of this study was to survey secondary school teachers in selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools regarding perceptions of their principal's leadership behavior and the level of shared decision making opportunities. Teachers were asked to complete two Likert-style surveys: The Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (LPI-O) (Kouzes & Posner, 2002) and the Shared Education Decision Making Survey-Revised (SEDS-R) (Ferrara, 1994). Based upon responses from the surveys, the researcher attempted to determine if teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behaviors were correlated to the level of shared decision making opportunities in their schools.

Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed in this study encompassed teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behaviors and the opportunities given to participate in shared decision making of the school. There was a void in the literature to better understand the relationship between leader behaviors of school principals and the level of shared decision making opportunities as perceived by teachers. The problem was organized in the following overarching research question: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in schools as perceived by teachers in selected Southeast Georgia schools?

When teachers feel their input is valued and they have support from their principals, they exert high levels of job satisfaction and experience a stronger motivation to accomplish an organization's goal or vision (Fuming & Jiliang, 2007; Makenzie, 2007). Billingsley and Cross (1992) and Gersten, Keating, Yovanoff, and Harniss (2001) reported in their studies that teacher satisfaction and willingness to commit to a goal or vision were both at high levels when they experienced engaging leadership behaviors with their administration.

Research Questions

The overarching research question derived from the problem statement is as follows: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools as perceived by teachers? This research question allowed for 11 subquestions to determine if there was a correlation between and among teacher perceptions of leader behavior and the level of shared decision making, addressing core aspects of schools today (Glickman, 1993).

Subquestion 1: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of planning?

Subquestion 2: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of policy development?

Subquestion 3: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of curriculum/instruction?

Subquestion 4: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of student achievement?

Subquestion 5: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of pupil personnel services?

Subquestion 6: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of staff personnel services?

Subquestion 7: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of school/community relations?

Subquestion 8: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of parental involvement?

Subquestion 9: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of staff development?

Subquestion 10: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of budget management?

Subquestion 11: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of plant management?

Significance of the Study

The significance of the problem addressed in this study was to provide insight on how effective shared decision making opportunities among principals and teachers may be helpful to school reform and restructuring. School reform and restructuring is still taking place in our education system today (GaDOE, 2018). Principals are continuously being challenged to self-evaluate and possibly restructure their leadership style to conform to the ever-changing needs and expectations of education (Dale, 2012). An extensive review of literature revealed several studies have been conducted correlating teacher perceptions of leader behavior to school effectiveness, student achievement, and teacher morale (Deal & Peterson, 1990; Freiberg, 1998; Hoy, Tarter, & Bliss, 1990). However, little research has been conducted correlating leadership behaviors to shared decision making opportunities. Furthermore, no research has been conducted correlating leadership behaviors to shared decision making in South Georgia. Results from this study may provide insight for principals who may be interested in implementing shared decision making in their schools as means of school restructuring.

Conceptual Framework

The symbolic interaction perspective, also known as symbolic interactionism, was the methodological framework for this study (Carter & Fuller, 2015). It is a sociological theory which promotes reliance upon daily interactions and experiences to influence and shape behaviors, actions, and reactions (Cole, 2017). Symbolic interactionism focuses on how individuals in society interpret and understand the world around them based upon their previous actions and reactions (Carter & Fuller, 2015). Blumer (1969) introduced and defined symbolic interactionism succinctly through three principles: (a) "Human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them"; (b) "The meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows"; and (c) "These meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters" (p. 2). Individuals have the capacity to manipulate their actions based on their perspective of situations and contribute to a setting where a common goal is being achieved (Carter & Fuller, 2016).

Theoretical Framework

There are several theoretical schools of thought in social science academia. The school of thought most relevant to this study is symbolic interactionism, which explains individual social behavior in terms of interaction (Carter & Fuller, 2016). Symbolic interactionism, developed by George Herbert Mead and coined by Herbert Blumer, is the sociological perspective that people attach meaning to their experiences and "interpret and define actions of their own and others" (Dong, 2008, p. 15). This meaning is subjective to individual interpretation of the experiences encountered: objects, events,

behaviors, etc. (Blumer, 1966). Mead's basis for this theory was the idea that people do not react to experiences directly but react to their interpretation of the meaning of those experiences (Dong, 2008).

Blumer (1969) defined symbolic interactionism as "activity in which human beings interpret each other's gestures and acts on the basis of meaning yielded by interpretation" (p. 65-66). Akson, Kisac, Aydin, & Demirbuken (2009) stated that symbolic interactionism "examines the meanings emerging from the reciprocal interaction of individuals in social environment with other individuals" (p. 902). Social interaction and the perspectives of individuals are key components to symbolic interactionism (Berg 1989; Stryker & Vryan, 2003).

Studies that embrace symbolic interactionism utilize descriptive data and analyze the perspectives of the participants (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2016). Individuals form meaning of situations based on their own perception and interpretation of the experiences they encounter. The definition of meaning is relevant to a person's perception, mental picture, or experience regarding a situation, an event, a phenomenon, or a series of interactions (Berg, 1989; Blumer, 1969; Meltzer, 1978).

Symbolic interactionism historically has been utilized in qualitative studies more than in quantitative studies (de Nooy, 2009). Ulmer & Wilson (2003) stated "symbolic interactionism is often mischaracterized as a perspective that rejects the collection and statistical analysis of quantitative data" (p. 531). However, there are quantitative studies containing research questions which require statistical analysis of data (Ulmer & Wilson, 2003). deNooy (2009) supports the use of quantitative methodology with symbolic interactionism stating, "statistical models have and are being developed that reveal the

effects of previous interaction in conjunction with social characteristics of the interacting people on their interpretations and actions. The statistical techniques are superior to the human eye in pattern detection" (p. 48). Bochenko (2014) further supports the utilization of quantitative statistics stating, "statistical data provide numbers, which are just as representative as words, with the statistical analysis serving as a narrative within credible written research" (p. 43). According to Field (2009), inferential statistics can "help us to confirm or reject our predictions" (p. 49). Mertler and Vannatta-Reinhart (2017) further supported the use of inferential statistics to draw conclusions based upon a larger population.

Summary of Methodology

The researcher was interested in determining if a relationship existed between leadership behaviors of principals and their teachers' perceptions of shared decision making opportunities. The variables in this study were leadership behaviors of principals, level of shared decision making, and teachers' perceptions of each. Since this study was correlational in nature, a quantitative statistical method was chosen to determine if a relationship (degree of association) existed among variables (Creswell, 2008). The abovementioned variables were considered "variables of interest" because no manipulation of those variables took place (Howell, 2008). This study was not designed or intended to determine if a cause and effect relationship existed among the variables. This study was designed to determine if a relationship existed among the variables. The population identified for this study consisted of approximately 1,721 teachers of secondary schools, grades 6-12, in selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools.

Purposeful sampling was utilized as all secondary teachers in the Southeast Georgia RESA district were selected as the sample. The intended population was homogeneous.

Demographic information was also included in the survey to determine characteristics of participants. Teachers indicated their gender, ethnic/cultural background, current grade level taught, length of experience teaching, length of time at current school, highest level of education obtained, and previous experience participating in shared decision making. To obtain the data necessary for the study, teachers were surveyed using Kouzes and Posner's Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (1997) and Ferrara's Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised (1994).

Kouzes and Posner (2012) developed the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership for transforming leadership and creating a positive environment within an organization. These five practices are: (a) model the way, (b) inspire a shared vision, (c) challenge the process, (d) enable others to act, and (e) encourage the heart. Ferrara (1994), revised the original Shared Education Decisions Survey to measure the level of shared decision making in the following areas: (a) planning, (b) policy development, (c) curriculum and instruction, (d) student achievement, (e) pupil personnel, (f) staff personnel, (g) community and school relations, (h) parental involvement, (i) staff development, (j) budget management, and (k) plant management. Participants further answered demographic information as part of the SEDS-R survey: (a) gender, (b) ethnic/cultural background (c) level at which they teach, (d) number of years teaching, (e) number of years in current school, (f) highest degree obtained, and (g) membership in shared decision making groups.

Both instruments were Likert-style surveys consisting of a10-point scale for the LPI-O and a 6-point scale for the SEDS-R.

Limitations

The study's focus was on the principal's leadership behaviors and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the school as perceived by the teachers. It was solely measuring the teachers' perceptions regarding both variables. It focused on the five practices of exemplary leadership as identified in the LPI-O and the eleven dimensions of the SEDS-R surveys. The study did not include any considerations or possibilities of shared decision making outside the instrument.

This study was limited to the two survey instruments utilized. There were no other means of data collection. Information gathered was dependent upon the validity and reliability of these two instruments only and the teachers' understanding of the concepts surveyed. The teachers' understanding of questions on both instruments also played a factor in the answers given.

This study was limited to the data collected through feedback received by those teachers from selected secondary schools in Southeast Georgia who were willing to participate. The results by no means represent the perceptions of all teachers in selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools. The data were strictly representative of those who chose to participate. Therefore, the results may have limited generalizability.

This study was strictly quantitative and did not allow for any qualitative components. However, a qualitative section could provide a deeper understanding of the teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behaviors and the level of shared

decision making in their respective schools. A qualitative study could provide a voice of reason and understanding of teachers' perceptions.

Definition of Terms

The following are key terms pertinent to this study:

Leadership: Leadership is an indirect, yet powerful influence which motivates a group of teachers regarding a mutual goal or vision on the quality of teaching, the effectiveness of the school, and the achievement of the students in the school (Fullan, 2001; Sergiovanni, 1999).

Leadership Behavior: Leadership behavior has been defined as "an observable set of skills and abilities" (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). These were measured through the Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (LPI-O) self-rating survey based on the *Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership*: (a) Model the Way, (b) Inspire a Shared Vision, (c) Challenge the Process, (d) Enable Others to Act, and (e) Encourage the Heart, (Kouzes & Posner, 1993). This survey was utilized and distributed to secondary school teachers participating in this study. A description of each practice as found in Kouzes and Posner's *The Leadership Challenge* (2012) is as follows:

Model the Way: The first of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership, Model the Way, is the ability to set the example for doing what one expects others to do (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Leaders set the standards of expectation by aligning their words and their actions with the shared visions and beliefs of their colleagues.

Inspire a Shared Vision: The second of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership, Inspire a Shared Vision, is the belief that one can make a difference and is

excited about the future possibilities (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). The leader passionately desires to enlist others in their aspirations by appealing to a common goal.

Challenge the Process: The third of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership, Challenge the Process, is the ability to take risks by seeking opportunities for innovative change (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). This challenge allows for and promotes growth and improvement while recognizing and accepting mistakes and failures.

Enable Others to Act: The fourth of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership, Enable Others to Act, is the ability to encourage and foster relationships through respect and trust (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Through empowerment, cooperation, and collaboration, teams can enjoy accomplishments and victories.

Encourage the Heart: The fifth of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership, Encourage the Heart, is the ability to recognize and show appreciation for the contributions of others (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Special initiative is taken to celebrate all victories, no matter how small they may seem.

Perception: Perception is defined by Lindsay and Norman (1977) as "the process by which organisms interpret and organize sensation to produce a meaningful experience of the world" (p. 161).

Shared Decision Making: Shared decision making is an ongoing, collaborative process allowing those closest to the students the opportunity to utilize their expertise in decision making. This process is intended to ensure that decisions are made with the best interest of the students and the school community in mind, regarding appropriate services at the local level (Bauer, 1992). Shared decision making was measured through the Shared Education Decisions Survey–Revised (SEDS-R) (1994) self-rating survey in the

areas of planning, policy development, curriculum and instruction, student achievement, pupil personnel services, community/school relations, parental involvement, staff development, budget management, and plant management (Ferrara & Repa, 1993). A description of each dimension as found in Ferrara's *Measuring Shared Decision Making* (Ferrara & Repa, 1993) is as follows:

Planning: The first dimension of the SEDS-R (Ferrara & Repa, 1993). It is the setting of the school's goals, objectives, strategies, and improvements. This also includes the designing of plans and maps demonstrating how each will be accomplished.

Policy Development: The second dimension of the SEDS-R (Ferrara & Repa, 1993). It is the building of the policies, procedures, rules, and regulation which govern and protect the school.

Curriculum and Instruction: The third dimension of the SEDS-R (Ferrara & Repa, 1993). It is what drives the learning that takes place in the school. It is the research, design, implementation, and revision of instructional materials for courses of study in each discipline.

Student Achievement: The fourth dimension of the SEDS-R (Ferrara & Repa, 1993). It is the academic performance and progress of the students. This is the dimension that aligns curriculum, instruction, and assessments to ensure student learning.

Pupil Personnel Services: The fifth dimension of the SEDS-R (Ferrara & Repa, 1993). These are services provided to the student to help support learning. These services include, but are not limited to, guidance counseling, remediation through special education, enrichment through accelerated courses, health services, and student recognition.

Staff Personnel Services: The sixth dimension of the SEDS-R (Ferrara & Repa, 1993). These are services provided to help support student learning and achievement. These services include, but are not limited to, co-teachers, paraprofessionals, and other supportive staff.

School/Community Relations: The seventh dimension of the SEDS-R (Ferrara & Repa, 1993). This is an opportunity for teachers to become involved in their community. They can do this through participation in civic groups and community organizations.

Parental Involvement: The eighth dimension of the SEDS-R (Ferrara & Repa, 1993). Teachers are given the opportunity to assist administration in selecting parents to serve on various committees to promote a partnership between parents and teachers.

Staff Development: The ninth dimension of the SEDS-R (Ferrara & Repa, 1993). This is an opportunity for teachers to attend professional seminars, workshops, and learning communities to help increase the faculty's knowledge and understanding of the teaching and learning processes. These are learning opportunities for faculty and staff to improve in the different areas of teaching.

Budget Management: The tenth dimension of the SEDS-R (Ferrara & Repa, 1993). This is the process of allocating, spending, and saving money provided to the school each fiscal year. It is ensuring departments receive needed money for educational resources.

Plant Management: The eleventh dimension of the SEDS-R (Ferrara & Repa, 1993). This is the process of allocating, spending, and saving money to make necessary repairs to the school. It is ensuring schools receive needed money for structural needs.

Teachers: For this study, teachers are those faculty members who hold a State of Georgia certificate in middle grades and/or secondary education. These individuals provide instruction, guidance, remediation, and enrichment. For this study, personnel who are administrators, guidance counselors, and media specialists were not included (Bochenko, 2014).

Secondary School: Educational institutions that serve students in grades 6-12, including middle school that are grades 6-8, junior high schools that are grades 8-9, high schools that are grades 9-12, and combined schools that have grades 6-12. Alternative educational settings were not included in this study (Bochenko, 2014).

Southeast Georgia Schools: All schools were from a local RESA district in Southeast Georgia. RESA stands for Regional Educational Services Agencies. According to the Georgia Department of Education (2018), there are 16 RESAs in the State of Georgia. The RESA district included in this study was the Coastal Plains RESA which includes the counties of Ben Hill, Berrien, Brooks, Colquitt, Cook, Echols, Irwin, Lanier, Lowndes, Tift, Turner, and the City of Valdosta. (GOSA, 2019).

Summary

Fullan (2010) states, "It has been observed that the principal is second only to the teacher in his or her impact on the student" (p 14). With knowledge of the impact teachers and principals have on students, it is important for the groups to be in sync with each other. Unfortunately, principals are not always aware of how their teachers perceived their leadership behaviors (Hardman, 2011; Ismail, 2012; Jennings, 2019). Gimbel (2003), in his research concluded that teachers feel the most important aspect of a

principal is his ability to relate to them professionally. They considered a trusting school climate and environment to be more important that the daily management of the building.

The literature review discussed various exemplary leadership skills and practices teachers would like their leaders to possess. The literature review also discussed the advantages and disadvantages of shared decision making (Barrett & Breyer, 2014; Liontos, 1993). This study was conducted to determine if teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behavior is related to the shared decision making opportunities in their schools. Through the results of the LPI-O and SEDS-R surveys, principals may have gained valuable knowledge and understanding of the teachers' perceptions of the leadership behaviors and how those perceptions were shaped by shared decision making opportunities.

The intent for this study was to determine if teachers' perceptions of their leader behavior was related to share decision making opportunities. The primary goal was to determine if there was a relationship between leadership behaviors and the level of shared decision making in secondary schools as perceived by the teachers. The study further examined the relationship between leadership behavior and each level of shared decision making as identified by the SEDS-R. Data were obtained from secondary school teachers (grades 6-12) in selected Southeast Georgia schools. Teachers were identified by gender, ethnic/cultural background, RESA district, grade(s) taught, years of experience, years at current school, highest degree earned, and involvement in shared decision making opportunities.

The goal of this study was to provide pertinent information to school administrators and leaders regarding their teachers' perceptions of leadership behavior

when correlated to shared decision making opportunities. In understanding the possible relationships between teacher perceptions of leadership and shared decision making as a means of school reform, principals could be more cognizant of the importance of providing such opportunities. Principals could be more willing to and more equipped in providing opportunities which ensure teachers feel their input is valued, increasing teacher satisfaction and willingness to commit to school wide goals and visions.

Further research may be initiated from the results of this study. This study may be replicated and examined in other settings. A qualitative component could be added allowing a voice for further understanding of the teachers' perceptions of their leaders' behaviors. The outcomes of further research could be beneficial to educational leaders looking for school reform options. Principals who desire implementation of shared decision making opportunities in their schools may find beneficial information in which to utilize.

Organization of the Study

This correlational study of principal leadership behavior and shared decision making is organized into five chapters. Foundational information for the study was outlined in Chapter 1 including an introduction to exemplary leadership behaviors and shared decision making. Also included was a narrative describing the necessity for shared decision making among leaders and their staff to meet today's educational expectations and requirements. The overarching research question, along with its 11 subquestions, presented how exemplary leader behaviors were linked to the dimensions of shared decision making. The significance of the study was aligned with school reform, restructuring, leadership behaviors, shared decision making, and teacher perceptions.

The conceptual framework, symbolic interactionism, was also identified in chapter one. A review of literature confirming the need for this study was presented in chapter 2.

Chapter 3 outlined the research process including methodology, instrumentation used, data collection, data analysis, ethical considerations, limitations, and assumptions. A summary of findings, including actual data collected from participants is presented in Chapter 4. The final chapter presents a summary of data and a discussion of findings, as well as implications drawn from the data, and recommendations for further study.

Chapter II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of the study was to explore a possible relationship between teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behavior as correlated with the level of shared decision making practiced in their schools. The manner in which teachers' perceptions of their leaders' behavior was determined through their assessment of the various opportunities provided for participation in shared decision making. The correlational study was supported through an extensive review of literature. The foundation for the literature review was established through the following resources: U.S. Department of Education, National Association of Education, The National Committee on Excellence in Education, National Education Association, Georgia Department of Education, Galileo, *EBSCOhost,* reference sections of books, articles, journals and studies. Various primary and secondary sources and texts obtained from colleagues were also utilized by the researcher.

A review of relevant literature was conducted to identify and synthesize the following in the proposed study: (a) theoretical foundations; (b) background information; and (c) key concepts and research related to this study. The review of literature confirmed the need for this study as no studies were found correlating teachers' perceptions of leader behavior and shared decision making in the State of Georgia. The literature review provided information considered pertinent to understanding data to be collected and analyzed in the study.

Organization of the literature review began with educational leadership and the need for reform and restructuring in today's schools. The review continued with an examination of foundational leadership theories, models, and behaviors related to the purpose of the study. The next section provided a description of teacher perceptions of leader behavior and the principal's role in shared decision making. The concluding section provided the theoretical framework for this study, and as well as a summary of the literature review.

School Reform and Restructuring

Educational leadership continues to be a critical issue in America and is at the forefront of legislative reform (Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008). State and national reports have made the public aware of declining standardized test scores, rising dropout rates, ineffective curricula, and low College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) ratings (Georgia Department of Education, 2018; U.S. Department of Education, 2010). There is a demand for improved education from all stakeholders (National Education Association, 2013). Educational leaders and teachers are being blamed for each of these; however, teachers blame parents for failing to address the needs of their children while parents blame schools for failing to provide adequate and challenging curriculum (Darling-Hammond, 2010). To further the blame-game, employers blame parents and schools for the lack of skills necessary to perform quality work (Leech, 1999).

Principals' leadership behaviors are crucial in shaping the culture of their schools. Timothy Waters, as cited by Wilhelm (2013) writes, "The future demands of the school principal are massive. In order to meet the needs of all stakeholders, the principal needs

to learn to share leadership responsibilities while understanding the implications of introducing change" (p. 62). Despite various leadership trainings designed to help leaders incorporate decision making strategies, there are contrasting opinions on how to best carry out shared decision making in education. The problem negatively impacts the effectiveness of education in today's schools due to differences in decision making opportunities and perceptions of leader behavior. A possible cause of this problem is the principal's understanding of and lack of preparation in developing professional learning communities that foster collaborative decision making environments (Dumas, 2010; Hord, 1996; Teague, 2012).

Currently, our public schools are performing well at providing what they were designed and expected to do ten to twenty years ago; which was to provide students with a basic education in reading, writing, and arithmetic. The needs and expectations of today's school are different than they were decades ago. According to the American Institutes for Research (1991), "our society has charged schools with delivering a high quality, multi-disciplinary education to all students…[but] never before have students come to the public school from such diverse backgrounds, family patterns, and native languages" (p. 1). The challenge in our schools today is being prepared to effectively meet all the needs of all the students.

With the signing and implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2001, and President Obama's reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education along with the Race to the Top (RttT) competitive grant in 2010, schools across America have made it a top priority to have great leaders and highly qualified teachers in all schools and classrooms (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). The increasing

complexity of issues in schools and the ever-changing needs of students have prompted principals to develop various methods of continuous improvement in their schools. Schools are changing at a rapid pace and administrators are faced with multiple challenges in conjunction with higher expectations and accountability. Elmore (2005) defines accountability as

> "coherence and alignment among individuals' concepts of what they are responsible for and how, collective expectation, at the organization level, and the process by which people within an organization justify what they do" (p. 140)

School reform, improving education, school effectiveness, and accountability are just a few of the key topics discussed in school districts across America today. Researchers have identified shared decision making as one of the characteristics demonstrated in high-achieving schools (Davis et al., 2005; Mehta, 2012; Nguni et al., 2006; Printy & Marks, 2006; Somech, 2005). Shared decision making is an effective way for principals to positively shape the culture of their schools and their communities.

Shared decision making is one of the educational movements of the 1990's. It is a fundamental change in the organization and management of schools. It alters the roles within the school allowing for educational decisions to be made through a collaborative effort. According to Liontos (1994), the purpose of shared decision making is "to improve school effectiveness and student learning by increasing staff commitment and ensuring that schools are more responsive to the needs of their students and community." Shared decision making has the potential to improve the quality of decisions; increase a decision's acceptance and implementation; strengthen staff morale, commitment, and

teamwork; build trust; help staff and administrators acquire new skills; and increase school effectiveness (Liontos, 1993).

School Reform

For thirty years, educators and legislators have been working to reform America's public education system (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). Beginning in 1983 with the publication of *A Nation at Risk,* continuing with the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the Race to the Top initiative in 2010, and the Every Student Succeeds Act in 2015, schools are under attack for reform, restructuring, and improvement (Graham, 2013; Kymes, 2004). Parents, educators, communities, business leaders, and legislators are all concerned with the current state of education and are calling for reform. As our communities are faced with various issues, educational reform is regarded as a "source of hope" or positive aspect in establishing a more stable society (Fullan & Miles, 1992).

Restructuring and reforming public education is not a new idea, however, as it has come in waves over the last thirty years. The first wave of reform in public education began in the 1980's with the publication of *A Nation at Risk*. This publication was a catalyst for the educational reform movement which continues to take place in America today. For the next several years, various reports calling for educational reform began to appear: Education Commission of the States (1983); National Commission of Educational Excellence (1983); Carnegie Forum (1986); and the National Governors' Association (1986) (Leech, 1999). Though this first wave of reform was well-intentioned, it took a top-down approach in attempting to improve a system that had been in place since the beginning of education (Boyd, 1987; Murphy, 1991).

The second wave of reform in public education began shortly after the expected outcomes of the first wave were not coming to fruition. It was during this educational movement that attention was directed to the organizational and management structure of the schools (Bacharach, 1990). Improved student learning and increased student achievement were the driving forces of the second wave of reform. Instead of focusing solely on standards, policies, and instructional methods, focus began to be placed upon leadership and organizational structure (Conway & Calzi, 1996). According to Lieberman and Miller (1990), the goal of this second wave of reform meant "positively effecting the outcomes of student learning" as the "aim of those educators who seek to support and sustain the reform movement of the present to influence school improvement" (p. 764).

Both waves of educational reformation began the path of what is still taking place in public school systems today. Mehta (2012) lists school reform strategies that have been at the forefront of the reform which have not resulted in the desired outcome: "Standards. Vouchers. Charters. Merit pay. Alternative teacher certification. More money, more data, and more accountability" have resulted in "so little real reform, so little real change" (p. 1-2). Researchers during these waves agreed that the principal is the critical component to successfully implementing school reform (Leech, 1999). Mortimore and Sammons (1991) echoed that belief stating, "The variation between [successful and less successful] schools can be accounted for by differences in school policies within the control of the principals and teachers" (p. 4). The missing link in school reform today is that policymakers are "undervaluing the benefits that come from teacher collaboration" and that "principals who spent more time on

collaborating…delivered gains to teachers and students alike" (Leana, 2011). When planning for and implementing school reform efforts, it is imperative that collaboration among principals and teachers is maintained (Maleyko & Gawlik, 2011).

The most recent wave of public education reform began with the reauthorization of Lyndon B. Johnson's Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 2001 by the Bush Administration and the signing into law the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in 2002 (United States Department of Education, 2002). These two laws demonstrated that many felt the federal government should increase its role in holding schools and teachers accountable and responsible for student learning, outcomes, and achievement (Klein, 2015; United States Department of Education, n.d.). According to Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2006), "NCLB has been broadly recognized as an unprecedented entry by the federal government into matters of education previously left to the states and school districts" (p. 669). It was not mandatory for states to comply with the requirements of NCLB; however, states that chose not to participate were at risk of losing Title I federal money (Klein, 2015).

Under the NCLB law, mandated testing, data-driven accountability, elimination of teacher tenure and seniority, merit pay, highly qualified teachers, school choice and vouchers, common core, charter schools, and closing the achievement gap were all at the forefront of the educational platform (Jennings & Rentner, 2006; Ravitch, 2010). States were required to put in place standards, strategies, and testing that would ensure all students would score at the "proficient level" on state mandated tests by 2014 (United States Department of Education, 2002). Focus was placed on improving test scores, allowing parent choice in school selection, and ensuring all teachers and staff were highly

qualified (Darling-Hammond, 2007). States were monitored through "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) and serious sanctions were implemented for those states that did not make AYP. Unfortunately, many schools were unable to achieve such impossible expectations and were stigmatized as failing (Ravitch, 2010).

NCLB aimed to increase student achievement and decrease the achievement gap in "at-risk" students: children in minority groups, students with disabilities, students from low socio-economic status homes, and English language learners (Leonardo, 2007; Hursh, 2007). As altruistic as this sounded, NCLB negatively impacted "at-risk" students and inadvertently "blamed the victim" for the failing of schools and then punished them through AYP. The Act looked good on paper but it did not address the "deficit thinking" ingrained in our education system regarding racial and class bias (Smyth, 2008; Valencia, 2010). It continued its inequality of funding of schools by not providing for the populations in most need of funding, skewed school reform with data measurement, and gave the illusion of school choice (Smyth, 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2007; Gay, 2007; Hursh, 2007). Darling-Hammond (2007) summed it up best when she stated, "The biggest problem with the Act is that it mistakes measuring schools for fixing them" (p. 249).

With many states unable to make AYP, the Obama Administration offered waivers releasing states from the laws of NCLB (Klein, 2015). These states traded NCLB mandates and embraced various strategies and standards meant to help students prepare for higher education and workforce opportunities. Instead of updating the previous administration's NCLB Act, the Obama Administration "sought to encourage state governments to adopt elements of their education agenda…a series of policy

competitions collectively known as Race to the Top (RttT)" (Howell & Magazinnik, 2017, p. 502). On February 17, 2009, President Barack Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). Through the ARRA, $4.35 billion was designed for the RttT Fund, a competitive grant program that encouraged and rewarded states for "creating the conditions for education innovation and reform; achieving significant improvement in student outcomes, including making substantial gains in student achievement, closing achievement gaps, improving high school graduation rates, and ensuring student preparation for success in college and careers; and implementing ambitious plans in…core education reform areas…" (United States Department of Education, 2009).

RttT heavily depended on state government participation, but did not allow for much leeway in the policies it could adopt as the Obama Administration decided which policies would be rewarded (Howell & Magazinnik, 2017; Ravitch, 2010; Ravitch, 2013; Valencia, 2010). This competitive grant program differed from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and previous "traditional" federal programs which supported education based upon educational and demographic needs. Most federal educational funds have been allocated and distributed to states using need-based formulas regardless of each school's performance on tests or their support of school reform policies (Beam & Conlan, 2002). Like previous administrations, RttT's focused on school reform and restructuring; however, it was a competitive grant program that only supported those states which had a track record for innovate reform plans plus commitments from various stakeholders (Nee, 2010; McNeil, 2011). According to McGuinn (2012), "The Department of Education established a number of criteria that

state had to meet to even be eligible to apply for RttT, and these requirements have had a major effect on state school reform efforts, independent of the specific grant proposals that the states submitted" (p. 143). This was a shift from "sanctions (sticks) to incentives (carrots) as a way of motivating state reform and shifting the Department of Education away from being a compliance-monitoring organization to being one focused on capacity building and innovation" (McGuinn, 2012).

RttT also had a significant impact on national government involvement in state education decisions and policies. It pushed states to make reforms that had long been resisted and ignored, such as common assessments, standards, and teacher evaluations (McGuinn, 2012). It will be interesting to see how states respond to these federal mandates, pressures of common goals, and adoption of changes that are politically unpopular. According to Volden (2007), states have historically sought to maximize the money they receive from the federal government in ways that will minimize federal control, and that federal money is allocated toward priorities established by the states and generally away from any type of reform.

Recognizing the need for continued educational reform and improvement, the Obama Administration answered the call with assistance from educators and families throughout the United States (U. S. Department of Education, 2020). On December 10, 2015, President Barack Obama signed Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) into legislation reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) which promoted quality and equality in education (U. S. Department of Education, 2020). President Lyndon B. Johnson signed ESEA into law in 1965, believing "full educational opportunity" should be "our first national goal" (U. S. Department of Education, 2020).

President Obama concurred with President Johnson's belief and the main purpose of ESSA is to ensure all students receive a quality education (Lee, 2014-2020).

NCLB was due for revision in 2007 as many of its requirements had become ineffective. ESSA replaced NCLB and encouraged states to take charge and hold school accountable in areas from testing and teacher quality to enhancing low-performing schools and increasing graduation rates (Klein, 2015; Lee, 2014-2020). It challenged states to develop rigorous accountability goals and systems that are "designed to close achievement gaps, increase equity, improve the quality of instruction, and increase outcomes for all students" (U. S. Department of Education, 2020). School interventions, mandated testing, challenging academic standards (reading, math and science), English-Language Learners, special education, teacher evaluations, graduation rates, goals for academic achievement, achievement gap closures, state and local report cards, and various funding and a grants all encompass ESSA (Klein, 2015).

According to McGuinn (2012), "Federalism and the lack of national constitutional authority to directly impose school reform on the states have greatly complicated politics and policy making in American education, as they have forced the federal government to pursue its goals for school reform indirectly through the grant-in-aid system and state education agencies" (p. 152). Obama's RttT competitive grant program may be considered an attempt to correct the failures of NBLC, but will have historical significance in the way federal funds are delegated to states for educational restructuring and reform (McDonnell, 2010).

Leadership Theories, Models, and Behaviors

Over the last several decades, educational leadership has become increasingly more complex (Bass, 1990; Burns, 1978; Maxwell, 2007). It continues to be a major focus regarding school reform, student achievement, and accountability. There have been many forms of leadership styles researched over the 150 years such as trait, contingency, situational, and behavioral (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). More recent studies have focused on transactional, transformational, servant, instructional, and passive-avoidant (Avolio, 2007; Horn-Turpin, 2009; Howell, 2001; Northouse, 2007).

Leadership theories such as the Great Man Theory, McGregor's Theory X and Y, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Mouton's Managerial Grid, Fiedler's Contingency Theory, Burns' Transformational and Transactional Models, Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model, and Kouzes and Posner's Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership Model have all played vital roles in leader behavior and school effectiveness. Each has played a large role in the overall organizational health of a school. Leaders must be willing to transform their behavior to meet the needs of their organization.

The Great Man Theory was one of the first views of leadership. Proponents of this theory assumed that leaders were born, not made, due to traits they inherited. The capacity for leadership was one that was inherent; one was either born a natural leader or was not (Malos, 2012). Many believed that nurture and training did not have as great an influence over a person as did nature and instinct (Lipham & Hoeh, 1974). Due to certain inherited traits, great leaders were made and would emerge in time (Galfo, 1975). Some

of these traits and skills were assertiveness, dependability, persistent, self-confidence, creativity, diplomacy, and organization (Malos, 2012).

McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y (1960) differed from the Great Man Theory because behavior theorists assumed that leaders could be made, rather than born with certain inherited traits. McGregor described assumptions managers held regarding the human nature of their employees. Theory X was the assumption that man disliked work, was lazy, and unmotivated. The employer would provide direction and control using authority and power. Theory Y was the assumption that man was motivated and responsible and would achieve personal success as the organization achieved success (McGregor, 1960).

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1954) explained that one would reach full potential once basic needs for sustaining life were met. The most basic needs were food, shelter, and clothing (physiological needs). Once those needs were met, the need for safety and security arose (self-preservation). The next level of the hierarchy was the need for belonging and acceptance (social, esteem, and self-actualization). Once all the other components had been met, it was only then that self-actualization could be achieved. According to Maslow (1954), it was at the self-actualization stage where one's full potential would be reached.

Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid (1975) utilized two axes. The horizontal axis represented the leader's concern for the production of the business (Initiating Structure). The vertical axis represented the leader's concern for the people within the organization (Consideration). Those leaders interested in the production of the company focused on the production axis while those interested in the interpersonal relations in the

organization focused on the people axis. Each dimension on the grid ranged from one to nine, representing the amount of concern for production and people. The number one represented minimum concern while the number nine represented maximum concern for each category (Blake & Mouton, 1975). By understanding the grid leaders can assess the situation at hand and determine where on the grid they must be to achieve desired results.

The Managerial Grid is divided five sections: quadrants and a mid-point. The first quadrant presented the Country Club managers. These managers exhibited high concern for people and low concern for production. They would score a 1 on task and a 9 on people. The second quadrant presented the Team Leaders. These managers exhibited high concern for people as well as high concern for production. These managers would score a 9 on task and a 9 on people. The third quadrant represented those managers who exhibited low concern for people and for the production of the company. These managers were considered Impoverished. They would score a 1 on task and a 9 on people. The fourth quadrant represented Task managers, or Authoritarians. These exhibited a high concern for production and a low concern for the people. These managers would score a 9 on task and a 1 on people. The mid-point of the grid represented the most desirable place for a leader to be - the Middle Road managers. These exhibited the same amount of concern for both the production of the company and the people within the company (Blake & Mouton, 1978). By understanding the grid leaders can assess the situation at hand and determine where on the grid they need to be to achieve desired results.

Fiedler's Contingency Theory (1967) was based on the idea that a group's performance was a result of two situations: how the leader interacted with the people in

the organization and how favorably the group reacted to the leader (Pires da Cruz, Nunes, & Pinheiro, 2011). The leader's interaction was based upon esteem for his or her least-preferred co-workers (Lamb, 1985). Fiedler (1967) based his theory on the hypothesis that leaders who exhibit certain leadership styles performed best when faced with situations favorable to their style of leadership. Northouse (1997), as cited by Pires da Cruz et al. (2011) states, "Leaders motivated towards tasks are primarily concerned with reaching objectives, while leaders motivated towards relationships are concerned with developing close interpersonal relationships" (p. 12).

The components of Fiedler's Contingency Theory were leader-member relations, task structure (job definition), and position power (the power vested by the organization to the leader). Leaders were classified as being task-oriented or human relations-oriented. This was measured by the Least Preferred Co-Worker Scale. Task-oriented leaders were those leaders who perceived a large difference between their most-preferred co-workers and their least-preferred co-workers. These leaders may also perceive their least-preferred co-workers unfavorably, showing favoritism to their most-preferred co-workers (Pires da Cruz et al, 2011). Fielder suggested that a task-oriented leader would be most effective in situations where conditions were either very favorable or very unfavorable. He also suggested that a human relations-oriented leader would be most effective in situations where conditions fell in the middle range of favorableness (Fiedler, 1967).

Hersey and Blanchard Situational Theory (1982) stressed the importance of a leader understanding a situation at hand and responding appropriately. Developed by Hersey and Blanchard, this theory "stressed the need to relate the leader's style to the

maturity level of the followers" (McCleskey, 2014, p. 118). Based up the maturity of the followers, then leaders are either task-oriented or relation-oriented. According to Bass (2008) and Hersey & Blanchard (1969), as referenced by McCleskey (2014), "The level of maturity (both job and psychological maturity) of followers determines the correct leadership style and relates to previous education and training interventions" (p. 118).

Kouzes and Posner (2012), prominent scholars in the field of transformational leadership, developed the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership for transforming leadership and creating a positive environment within an organization: (a) Model the Way, (b) Inspire a Shared Vision, (c) Challenge the Process, (d) Enable Others to Act, and (e) Encourage the Heart. These practices can make a positive difference in any organization. Twenty-five years of quantitative and qualitative research implementing these practices have shown a significant increase in commitment, engagement, and performance (Kouzes & Posner, 2012, p. 1-7).

The first practice requires leaders to demonstrate an example of expected behavior by aligning their actions with the shared values of the organization. Actions speak louder than words, and people tend to be more willing to follow when they witness what is being said. Secondly, leaders should discuss exciting possibilities and share their excitement with others, enlisting them to be part of the changes. They must reflect into the past and evaluate the present to prepare for the future. They will be passionate about the future and will possess the desire to achieve greatness. The understood vision is what sets a company apart from others. Thirdly, leaders must be creative and explore possibilities through taking risks to make necessary changes. They continuously search for new and improved opportunities that will take the organization to the next level.

Leaders take charge of the challenges and promote fresh and healthy changes through challenging yet rewarding experiences (Kouzes & Posner, 2012, p. 157- 183).

Fourthly, leaders must collaborate with their cohort fostering relationships and building trust. Collaboration among constituents is a must. In order for this to be successful, the leader must form relationships, create an atmosphere of trust and respect, and promote interdependence. Finally, leaders must respect, show appreciation, and create a community atmosphere. They must enable their constituents to recognize and reach their full leadership potential. Helping others develop self-confidence, accepting responsibility, and understanding the need for accountability will help ensure their commitment to their jobs (Kouzes & Posner, 2012, p. 215-269).

Implementing these practices helps leaders empower their constituents, transforming the effectiveness and productivity of the organization. According to Kouzes and Posner (2012), most people want a leader who is credible, honest, forward-looking, competent, inspiring and who has unwavering commitment to the organization and the its people (p. 33-36). People are more willing to listen to and follow their leader when relationships have been formed. This makes a difference in how people view the organization and themselves. Leaders should always remember that leadership is an "affair of the heart" (Kouzes & Posner, 2012, p. 345). They must love to lead and lead to inspire.

Leadership

> Even "with the plethora of research on the topic of leadership, we continue to see ambiguous and ill-defined concepts and theories on the topic of leadership. The all-encompassing topic of 'leadership' has subsumed such a diversity of

perspectives and topics, that hardly anyone can determine what leadership actually is, nor how it should be defined" (Stewart, 2006, p. 3).

Leadership is one of the most studied yet least understood aspects in social science today (Antonakis, Cianciolo, & Sternberg, 2004; Burns, 1978). Wren (1995) states, "Leadership is one of the most widely talked about subjects and at the same time one of the most elusive and puzzling" (p. 27). Bass (1990) states there are "almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept" (p. 11).

Leadership is a process by which a person, or group of people, influence others within an organization to accomplish an objective. These leaders apply characteristics such as morals, values, beliefs, and ethics. Maxwell (2007) and Fullan (2007) agree leadership and its influences affect all aspects of human life. Cheng (1996), based upon his research in Hong Kong stated,

> …school leadership is not only a process to influence the behavior of school members but also their attitudes, values, and beliefs; not only individual members but also the whole school; not only the goal of achievement but also goal development and culture building in school (p. 10).

Bass and Riggio (2006) and Kouzes and Posner (2002) agree the continual evolution of leadership challenges leaders to be agents of change within their organizations. Bass (1990) states,

> Leadership has been conceived as the focus of group processes, as a matter of personality, as a matter of inducing compliance, as the exercise of influence, as particular behaviors, as a form of persuasion, as a power relation, as an instrument

> to achieve goals, as an effect of interaction, as a differentiated role, as initiation of structure, and as many combinations of these definitions. (p. 11)

Though leadership remains ambiguous in definition, it is one of the most crucial components of all organizations, not just in education. Higher levels of leadership are needed today more than ever for our modern education system to work and flourish due to competition, technological advancement, and a shift in attitudes, values, and societal norms (Landis, Hill, & Harvey, 2014). Regardless of the organization, for it to be successful the leadership must be prepared to meet and conquer any challenge it faces. Pfeffer (1977), as cited by Landis et al. (2014), believed, "In order to understand the leader, the behavior of the leader must first be understood, along with their thought process in regards to the situation they are experiencing at the time" (p. 100).

Effective Leadership

Effective leadership is an essential factor in the life and success of any organization. Kumar, Adhish, and Deoki (2014) state,

> Leadership cannot be described simply in terms of the behavior, rather leadership involves collaborative relationship that leads to collective action grounded in the shared values of people working together to effect positive change. Leaders establish direction by developing a vision, then align people by communicating this vision and inspiriting them to overcome hurdles. Effective leadership may be the result of exhibiting the right behaviors at the right time. (p. 82)

According to Depree (1987), it is the leader's job and responsibility to know and understand the diverse abilities people bring to an organization while allowing time, space, and freedom so they can grow and reach their full potential. With the right

leadership, the potential of an organization can be transformed into the vision of that organization. An effective leader is able to demonstrate through personality, demeanor, and communication the ability to bring together team players capable of transforming an organization by setting and reaching personal and professional goals (Hoyle, 2006; Nelson, Schroeder, & Welpman, 2014).

Mason (2006) and Goffee and Jones (2010), as referenced by Nelson et al. (2014) state that effective leaders are those who "sometimes subordinate themselves to the will of others, placing the common interest before one's parochial interest" and are "capable of analyzing any differences in team members' abilities…slowing down so that others can follow" (p. 84). Making accurate assessments of one's leadership ability, along with assessments of others within the organization, will allow for growth of that leader (Goleman, 1998). Continual assessment of self and others will allow the leader to act and react appropriately and effectively (Peck & Dickenson, 2009). This will allow the leadership to learn through experiences and become unique to the needs of the organization (Goffee & Jones, 2010). Successful leadership allows for collaboration, allowing employees to learn through experiences and from one another (Nelson et al., 2014). Oginde, as quoted by Nelson et al. (2014) states, "leaders with inspirational motivation, challenge followers with high standards, communicate optimism about future goal attainment, and provide meaning for the task at hand" (p. 92).

Rowland (2008) found that there is a significant correlation between the leadership practices of principals and the morale of the teachers on their faculty. Just as teacher behavior influences the morale of students, principal behavior influences the morale of teachers. How principals act and react to teachers will determine and influence

the morale of the teachers, which affects the tone and environment within the school daily. With participative leadership, morale is higher because faculty members feel they are valued, their opinions are important, and their effort is appreciated (Somech & Wenderow, 2006).

Somech (2005) found in his research that there was a "positive relation between participative leadership and teachers' empowerment as well as a positive relation between participative leadership and school-staff team innovation…" (p.777). Faculty members are more willing to work collaboratively to reach a common goal when they feel empowered, heard, and respected. They tend to be more supportive and accepting of decisions when they have had input in the process. They also tend to be more understanding of the reasoning behind the decision made. Each of these positively impacts the organizational health and climate of the school.

It is imperative that all members of a faculty work together for the betterment of their school and students (Somech, 2005). Each person on the faculty has a common goal: effective student achievement and success. Communication among faculty, staff, and administration is paramount. When there is a breakdown in communication, or when opinions are not respected, the morale of the teachers suffers (Rowland, 2008). Participative or cooperative leadership is one which allows for communication and collaboration so all who have a vested interest have input in the decision making process. It allows each member to take ownership of the decisions made as well as the outcomes of those decisions within the school. McCloskey (1967) believed that leadership which fosters communication and collaboration was characteristic of "mutual goodwill, mutual willingness to assess the implications of facts, common effort to seek and understand

reasons for differences of viewpoint, joint tolerance, and reasonable amounts of patience" (p. 362). Leithwood, Mascall, & Strauss (2009), regarding cooperative leadership, state:

> …also enhances opportunities for the organization to benefit from the capacities of more of its members, permits members to capitalize on the range of their individual strengths, and develops among organizational members a fuller appreciation of interdependence and how one's behavior affects the organization as a whole. (p. 2)

Effective, strong leaders are vital to the preparation, organization, and successful implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) that are becoming more prevalent in today's schools (Conley & Goldman, 1994; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991). The formation of PLCs in schools is one way to ensure leaders are encouraging their faculty to participate in shared decision making. Fullan (2001) set forth five guidelines regarding PLCs to help leaders create and promote a shared vision among faculty and staff to examine current teaching practices and results: (1) a deep sense of moral purpose; (2) knowledge of the change process; (3) a capacity to develop relationships across diverse individuals and groups; (4) fostering knowledge creation and sharing; and (5) the ability to engage with others in coherence making amidst multiple innovations (p.7). Cunningham and Gresso (1993) echo the necessity for leaders to be cognizant of the underlying assumptions throughout the school and proactive in helping shape the values and beliefs among faculty and staff.

Transformational Leadership

Leadership is important in all aspects of life. Though the concept of leadership has been around since the beginning of time, transformational leadership was introduced in 1985 (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). Kouzes and Posner coined the phrase "exemplary leadership" in 1995, arguing that leadership is no longer an office or position, but a series of behaviors the leader practices (Balyer, 2012). Leadership is key to any organization; public school is no exception. Leaders ultimately set the tone, the atmosphere, and the morale within their school. Leadership is crucial to the school's success and to the camaraderie of its faculty and staff. Leaders and their leadership are the decisive factor that can make or break an organization.

Transforming leadership empowers individuals to strive toward excellence while maintaining a collective vision. When members of an organization have a collective vision, the organization's health is more positive than when there are dissenting views. Currently, one of the most studied models in schools is transformational leadership (Heck & Hallinger, 1999). Tucker and Russell (2004) explore how transformational leadership continues to change organizations and the environments which surround them. The transformational type of leadership is one which brings about change in an organization by motivating people through modeling and empowerment, instilling higher morals and values, and inspiring a united vision, positive interactions, and trust (p. 103-107). The goal is to improve the organization through building leaders among the followers. Though this is not a new concept of leadership, it is one which has attracted much attention over the last several few decades.

James McGregor Burns (1978) first introduced the idea of transforming leadership as a way to explain how leaders and followers could work together to improve the morale, mission, vision, and productivity of an organization. Bernard M. Bass (1985) added to Burns's research explaining how transformational leadership could be measured. Bass and Avolio (1990) further added to the research by identifying the importance of connecting life experiences to the transforming behavior (Tucker & Russell, 2004, p. 104). Bennis and Nanus (1997), Hersey and Blanchard (1996), Stephen Covey (1991), and Kouzes and Posner (1987), have since added extensive research to the theory of transformational leadership (Tucker & Russell, 2004, p. 104-109).

The premise of transformational leadership is that a leader will instill in his or her followers the motivation needed to create change from within an organization. This change will be a result of guidance, encouragement, and empowerment given to the followers by the leader. Clear themes are established. Follower development is encouraged allowing those in the organization to recognize and act upon their own leadership characteristics (Tucker & Russell, 2004). This influence of change within the organization, which is based upon a new-found vision, spills into the community and other external environments. As with any type of leadership, there is always potential for dangers and abuses. This "dark side" of leadership, explained by McIntosh and Rima, as cited by Tucker and Russell (2004), can be personal and/or organizational and will undermine all the efforts and accomplishments made by those within the organization (p. 107).

Transformational leaders are needed so that organizations can grow and improve. These leaders analyze existing structures and alter them through new visions, ideas,

empowerment, positive motivation, and accountability (p. 109). Transformational leadership goes against the original thought that leaders were born and not made (Tucker & Russell, 2004). Transformational leadership employed correctly will allow followers to embrace the leader within themselves resulting in enhanced commitment, productivity, and morale.

Somech & Wenderow (2006) refer to participative leadership as "joint decision making, or at least shared influence in decision making, by a superior and his or her employees" (p.747). A participative leader is one who strives to work with his/her employees, treating each with dignity and respect, and considering each a team member crucial to the success of the goals within the school. Such writers as Douglas McGregor, Rosabeth Kanter, and Tom Sergiovanni paved the way for group participation in decision making in the realm of public education (Hoyle, 2006). Administration, faculty, and staff work together as a team to formulate and implement decisions beneficial for their school and students. It is conducive to camaraderie among the faculty members, allowing for an atmosphere of collaboration and respect. A participative leader works with his/her faculty to ensure tasks are delegated, outcomes are set, decisions are jointly made, goals are accomplished, and communication is always open.

Shared Leadership

Today's schools are different than those of years past, so traditional leadership models are ineffective; therefore, current leadership models must be more evolved and compatible (Elmore, 2005). No longer is the traditional view of leadership where one person is in charge and in control considered to be the only acceptable way to lead. Today's leadership theory scholars, researchers, and practitioners challenge this way of

thinking and argue that leadership should be shared among a group or set of individuals in an organization rather than in the hand of one who holds the superior leader role (Pearce, Manz, & Sims, 2009). This type of leadership recognizes the need for multiple leaders within the organization who contribute in the decision making process (Harris & Spillane, 2008).

Shared leadership is focused on distributing the leadership role among team members instead of assigning it to a single leader. This allows for teacher influence and participation in decision made with the principal (Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007; Seashore Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010). According to Pearce, et al. (2009), shared leadership is a dynamic process where individuals sharing in common organizational visions come together and work together to achieve the organization's mission and goals. Conger and Pearce (2003), as quoted by Kocolowski (2010), adds to this definition of shared leadership: "This influence process often involves peer, or lateral, influence and at other times involves upward or downward hierarchical influence" (p. 24). Shared leadership can increase the self-determination of faculty and staff, allowing them to be better prepared and responsive to the many demands and expectations placed on the teaching profession (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Singh, 2005). There is increasing evidence that schools which participate in shared leadership show increased student learning along with improved organizational outcomes (Harris & Spillane, 2008).

According to Wilhelm (2013),

> …with educators being held accountable for higher and higher student outcomes, schools need to make a major shift from traditional to shared leadership. Principals

> can no longer lead instructional reform alone: The voice and expertise of teachers are essential to improve teaching and learning. (p. 62)

Shared leadership, if used in correctly, in conjunction with other styles of leadership can give an organization "a more flexible, dynamic, robust and responsive leadership platform" (Pearce, et al., 2009, p. 237). According to Wilhelm (2010),

> Accountability for all students' success continues to rise. As principals and teachers attend conferences that spark a desire to transform their schools into professional learning communities to improve student learning, shared leadership becomes an urgent necessity." (p. 22)

Shared leadership has several advantages over traditional leadership styles in motivation, cognition, and empowerment (Solansky, 2008). Shared leadership allows for a team environment consisting of a shared purpose, social support, and a unified voice (Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007). This involves collaborative efforts in completing various tasks while recognizing diversity and while supporting one another through healthy relationships both individually and corporately (Wood, 2005). Teachers become more comfortable giving opinions and influencing school-side decisions (Bligh, Pierce, & Kohles, 2006). Jackson (2002), in his qualitative study in a hospital, determined there were four dimensions of shared leadership: "accountability, partnership, equity, and ownership" (p. 168).

Chen, Kanfer, Kirkman, Allen, and Rosen (2007) determined that for shared leadership to be successful, "team leaders should ensure they delegate enough autonomy and responsibility to all members in their team, involve the team in decision making, and encourage the team to self-manage its performance to the extent possible" (p. 343). The

focus in shared leadership is that of practice instead of roles and structures, allowing members of an organization to take ownership, make decisions collaboratively, and speak for the entire organization (Allen, Morton, & Li, 2003; Murphy, Elliot, Goldring, & Porter, 2006, Raelin, 2006; Spillane, 2005).

According to Bennis, Spreitzer, and Cummings (2001), shared leadership is the leadership model of the future as it empowers individuals at all levels and allows them opportunities to take the lead where needed (p. 140). As shared leadership opportunities arise, teachers experience successful collaboration resulting in an increase of leadership capacity enabling their leadership ability to be successful without the guidance or and dependence upon the principal (Lambert, 2006).

Deiss and Soete (1997), as cited by Bennis et al. (2001) stated

> Shared leadership fosters an environment that responds in agile ways to newness. It promotes a greater degree of creative and rational thought at the levels where it is needed. It enables all individuals in the organization to test their own assumptions and those of others rather than waiting for the ideas and decisions to be handed down through the hierarchy. True shared leadership can happen anywhere in an organization. (p. 140)

Shared leadership in schools is transformational by nature: it improves and enhances communication and collaboration among colleagues, it helps establish missions, visions, and goals, it increasing trust among peers, and it fosters empowerment while leading schools towards success (Wooleyhand, 2012). The key to shared decision making is the willingness of the principal to promote a collaborative environment conducive for shared responsibility through lateral or peer influence where stakeholders

are empowered through equity and accountability (Bligh, Pierce, & Kohles, 2006; Singh, 2005). The transformation necessary to launch a school into this type of professional learning community takes time; it does not happen overnight (Wilhem, 2013).

Shared Decision Making

Leech & Fulton (2007) state, "The traditional roles of teachers and principals have changed and improved organizational teamwork is fostered by all members of the learning community assuming decision making roles" (p. 630). Teachers and principals are working together in more collaborative roles than ever before. Gone are the days where principals are the dictatorial figures while teachers are the submissive followers. Collaboration and shared decision making opportunities among leaders and teachers are improving the organizational health in today's schools. According to Wilhelm (2010), "Highly effective principals maintain a balancing act of 'stepping up' (being more directive as needed), and 'stepping back' (acting more in a guiding role as appropriate)" (p. 24). Smylie (1992) stated, "Teacher participation in decision making gives administration access to critical information closest to the source of many problems of schooling (p. 53).

Horn-Turpin (2009), referencing two earlier studies by Billingsley and Cross (1992) and Gersten, et al. (2001), reports that administrative support strongly correlates to higher levels of teacher satisfaction. This satisfaction increased teacher commitment to their jobs. Teachers' perceptions of leadership influence their sense of efficacy and job satisfaction (Printy & Marks, 2006; Ross & Gray, 2006). This efficacy and job satisfaction can positively affect the overall organizational health of the school. Principals' leadership behaviors are crucial in shaping the culture of their schools.

Shared decision making is an effective way for principals to positively shape the culture. Researchers have identified shared decision making as one of the characteristics demonstrated in high-achieving schools. Meadows (1990), as quoted by Liontos (1994) stated, "SDM is a process of making educational decisions in a collaborative manner at the school level. This process is an ongoing one; SDM cannot be done once and then forgotten" (p. 2)

Conway and Calzi (1995) raised concern that empowering teachers through decision making opportunities can lead to negative consequences if not employed properly. Studied for more than fifty years, shared decision making has resulted in conflicting results. For the last decade, the teacher involvement movement has flourished, leaving question to the effectiveness it has on the educational environment. Conway and Calzi (1995) compared shared decision making to a rosebush; it looks wonderful on the outside, but there are issues on the inside causing one to be cognizant (p. 46). John Dewey, as referenced by Conway and Calzi (1995), was a proponent of involving teachers in the decision making process allowing them a representative voice justifying their satisfaction (p. 45). Abraham Maslow, as referenced by Conway and Calzi (1995), questioned the validity of experiments based on democratic representation as people will always voice what is best for them, not necessarily what is best for the organization (p. 45).

Another concern regarding shared decision making is teacher willingness to participate. Many teachers feel mixed emotions when confronted with decision making opportunities. In his quantitative study, Smylie (1992) hypothesized four relationships which influence teachers' willingness to participate in the decision making process in

their schools: (a) the principal-teacher working relationship, (b) the norms influencing working relationships among teachers, (c) the teachers' perceived capacity to contribute to or make decisions, and (d) the teachers' sense of responsibility and accountability in their work with students (p. 56). The findings of the study revealed that "teachers' willingness to participate in school decision making is influenced primarily by their relationships with their principals" (Smylie, 1992, p. 63).

Teacher Perception

Perceived leader behavior plays an integral part of an organization's health and overall effectiveness of that organization (Bohn, 2002; Dabke, 2016). Principals and their leader behavior have a direct effect on the climate of the school, including the viewpoints and attitudes of the teachers (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2013). How teachers perceive their principal's leader behavior may or may not be aligned with the leader's self-perception. Principals may perceive their leader behavior as beneficial to the organization while teachers perceive the leader behavior differently. These misinterpretations may cause the organizational health of the school to decline and negatively impact the effectiveness of that school.

According to Lamb (1985), a group's perception plays a critical role in the acceptance of a leader and the ability of that leader to influence the group toward a unified goal (p. 2). Although leader behavior is influential in the educational processes of the school, perception of roles and behavior contribute to the effectiveness of the principal as a leader. Hersey and Blanchard (1977) stated, "it is the perception others hold about a leader's power that gives the leader the ability to induce compliance or to influence their behavior (p. 186). Perception is the process of decoding information

allowing a person to gain knowledge about the environment. Person perception encompasses observations made by and psychological properties embedded in each person. Role perception involves how others perception the leader and power held by that leader. It is that perceived power that allows the leader to have influence over others (Frasher & Frasher, 1981; Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; Katz & Kahn, 1978). Lamb (1985) stated that "perception depends on expectations, previous needs, values, and sent and received communications. It appears, then, that leader effectiveness may depend upon the perceptions of other concerning role and behavior" (p. 39).

Leithwood and Jantzi (1996) explored different variables which influenced teacher perceptions of their leader's behavior and practices. They stated,

> "…doing good work on behalf of one's school, and being seen to do such work, is likely the most powerful strategy for positively influencing teachers' perceptions of one's leadership; simply put, it is what you do, not who you are, that matters to teachers. The most powerful variable explaining teacher's leader perceptions, in-school conditions, encompasses the school's mission, vision and goals; culture; programs and instruction; policies and organization; decision making structures; and resources." (p. 531).

Teachers participating in Giannangelo & Malone's (1987) study revealed their perception of the most important leadership practice as being a strong instructional leader. A strong instructional leader was identified as one who was actively involved in curriculum decisions, mapping, good-practice strategies, and conducting teacher observations for improvement. Teachers participating in Richardson, Flanigan, Lane, & Keaster's (1992) study revealed their perception of the most important leadership

practices as being honesty, inspiring, visionary, caring, and competent. In a study conducted by Leech (1999) which implemented Kouzes & Posner's (1997) exemplary leadership practices, teachers participating revealed their perception of a strong leader is one who enables others and models the way.

Summary

A primary goal of the study was to determine if there was a correlation between teachers' perceptions of their leader's behavior and the level of shared decision making offered in the school. The study further determined the degree to which there is a relationship between the five leadership behaviors defined by Kouzes and Posner (1997) and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in each dimension of the Shared Education Decisions Survey. Data were collected from secondary school teachers employed in the Coastal Plains RESA and the Okefenokee RESA districts. Teachers were identified by their gender, years of experience, level of education (middle or high school), and RESA district. The intent of the study was to determine if the level of shared decision making opportunities presented to teachers influenced their perception of their leader's behavior.

Previous research focused on leadership models (Avolio, 2007; Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009; Kezar, Contreras-McGavin , & Carduccis, 2006; Seashore Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010) and principal leadership behavior (Bottoms & Schmidt-Davis, 2010; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Cheney & Davis, 2011, National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2013). Literature continued to explore shared decision making (Duke, Showers, & Imber, 1980; Weiss & Cambone, 1994; Davis, et al., 2005), and teacher perceptions (Frasher & Frasher, 1981; Hardman,

2011; Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; Katz & Kahn, 1978; McCann, 2011; Pittman, 2000). Various studies regarding teacher perceptions of principal leadership behavior were found correlating to teacher morale, student achievement, and at risk students (Castellon, 2007; Johnson, 2011; Moore, 2012). An extensive review of available literature resulted in a lack of information regarding teacher perceptions of leader behavior as correlated with shared decision making (Leech, 1999; Leech & Fulton, 2007; Pugh, 2009). Based upon the scarcity of literature, this study should be of theoretical and methodological significance to the educational community.

The study contributed to the existing body of literature available of how principal leadership behavior, shared decision making, and teacher perceptions are correlated. Secondly, the study provided a better understanding of the importance for principals to encourage and promote shared decision making opportunities in schools. Finally, this study established knowledge that teachers' perceptions of their leaders' behavior can be influenced upon opportunities to participate in shared decision making in the schools.

A description of the population along with its demographics, instrumentation, data collection procedures, and data analysis are examined in Chapter 3.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the purpose and rationale for the research design utilized for this study. The methodology presented included a description of the study, a description of how the participants were selected, the sample setting, the instrumentation chosen, the procedures, data collection and management, data analysis, and a summary including ethical considerations. Permission from Valdosta State University's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Research Participants (IRB) was obtained and approved (Appendix A).

The purpose of this correlational study was to determine if a relationship exists between teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behavior and the level of shared decision making practiced in selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools. According to McMillan & Schumacher (1997), the purpose of a correlational study is to investigate the relationship between two or more variables. This research attempted to determine teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behavior influence on shared decision making opportunities. The perceptions of the teachers, regarding opportunities for participation in shared decision making, indicated the degree to which they viewed their principal's leadership behavior.

As educators strive to improve school effectiveness and increase student learning, providing an understanding of the importance of collaboration may better prepare principals in providing opportunities for shared decision making among their faculty (Hargreaves, 1995). This study attempted to answer one overarching research question:

To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools as perceived by teachers?

The research question lent itself to answer 11 subquestions based upon the dimensions of the Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised (Ferrara, 1994).

Subquestion 1: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of selected Southeast Georgia secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in the area of planning as perceived by teachers?

Subquestion 2: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of selected Southeast Georgia secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in the area of policy development as perceived by teachers?

Subquestion 3: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of selected Southeast Georgia secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in the area of curriculum and instruction as perceived by teachers?

Subquestion 4: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of selected Southeast Georgia secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in the area of student achievement as perceived by teachers?

Subquestion 5: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of selected Southeast Georgia secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in the area of pupil personnel services as perceived by teachers?

Subquestion 6: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of selected Southeast Georgia secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in the area of staff personnel as perceived by teachers?

Subquestion 7: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of selected Southeast Georgia secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in the area of school/community relations as perceived by teachers?

Subquestion 8: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of selected Southeast Georgia secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in the area of parental involvement as perceived by teachers?

Subquestion 9: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of selected Southeast Georgia secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in the area of staff development as perceived by teachers?

Subquestion 10: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of selected Southeast Georgia secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in the area of budget management as perceived by teachers?

Subquestion 11: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of selected Southeast Georgia secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in the area of plant management as perceived by teachers?

Five components were measured with each subquestion utilizing Kouzes and Posner's five exemplary leadership practices, as measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (Kouzes & Posner, 1997). Each component addressed teachers' perceptions of leadership behavior in the use of a particular shared decision making

dimension by their principal. Principals were identified through: a) the location of their schools (Coastal Plains RESA); and, b) the grade level of the school in which they lead (middle, junior high, or high school).

Research Design

The researcher used a correlational design to examine if a relationship existed between teachers' perceptions of their leadership's behavior and the level of shared decision making practiced in their schools. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1997), as stated by Leech (1999), correlational research "investigates the relationship between two or more variables which are identified by theory, research, or experience as having the possibility of being related" (p. 74). This quantitative method of research utilizes correlational statistics to measure and determine if a relationship exists between two or more variables through studying a sample of a population with little to no manipulation of the variables in the study (Creswell, 2014). Correlation does not indicate causation; it simply seeks to establish an association between variables and their interrelations (Leedy & Ormrod 2010). Since the teachers' perceptions of their leader's behavior have already occurred, the variables in this study do not lend themselves to be manipulated.

Population and Sample

The population for this study consisted of all teachers in all secondary schools (grades 6-12, excluding alternative schools) in the Coastal Plains RESA district. There are 11 counties and 12 school systems that comprise the Coastal Plains RESA district: Ben Hill County, Berrien County, Brooks County, Colquitt County, Cook County, Echols County, Irwin County, Lanier County, Lowndes County, Tift County, Turner County,

and Valdosta City. Within this RESA district there are 15 middle schools, one junior high school, and 12 high schools. There are approximately 767 teachers in middle school (grades 6-8), 100 teachers in junior high school (grades 8-9), and 854 teachers in high school (grades 9-12) for a total of 1,721 district teachers (GOSA, 2019).

Participants were teachers from secondary schools within the Coastal Plains RESA district member school systems where the principals had at least two years of administrative service in their current school. Since data collected were dependent upon teachers' perceptions, of their principal's leadership behaviors and dimensions of shared decision making in their schools. Participants were selected through purposeful sampling (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997). Those whose principals had not served at least two years of administrative service at the time of the study were excluded. There were 26 secondary schools employing approximately 1,677 teachers who met this criterion. Each teacher selected had an equal opportunity for survey participation in the study and to become a part of the sample. The larger the sample in the study, the greater the possibility for representation of the population (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012).

The sample for this study was determined through information obtained from each school system regarding the principal's length of service in their current schools. Schools whose principals met the two-year requirement were then selected for this study. One system did not qualify for participation as both the middle school and high school principals were serving in their first year. A middle school in another system also did not qualify as the principal was serving in her first year as well. Several other schools did not participate in this study for various reasons: a superintendent from one county declined response to any invitation or contact attempts and three principals (two from middle

schools and one from a high school) in the RESA district denied the request for their faculties' participation. Of the 28 secondary schools in the Coastal Plains RESA District, 20 schools participated in this study. This represented 71 percent of the secondary schools in the RESA district. A total of 1,305 teachers from 10 middle schools (grades 6-8), one junior high school (grades 8-9), and 9 high schools (grades 9-12) were allowed to participate and received the survey. This represented 76 percent of the secondary school teachers in the RESA district. A summary of the information collected concerning schools and teachers in the RESA district, including population and sample is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Summary of Population and Sample Data

School Type (Grades)	Number of District Schools	Number of District Teachers	Number of Sample Schools	Number of Sample Teachers
Middle (6-8)	15	767	10	554
Jr. High (8-9)	1	100	1	100
High (9-12)	12	854	9	651
Total (6-12)	28	1,721	20	1,305

Source: Governor's Office of Students Achievement (2018)

Instrumentation

Data for this study were gathered using two survey instruments. The first instrument measured the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals. The other instrument collected demographic information and measured the level of shared decision making in each school. Each of these instruments was able to identify teachers' perceptions of the two variables. The two Likert-styles surveys used to answer the

research question and its subquestions were Kouzes and Posner's (1997) Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (LPI-O) and Ferrara's (1994) Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised (SEDS-R).

Leadership Behavior Instrument

The Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (LPI-O) instrument used to measure leader behavior was developed by Kouzes and Posner in the early 1980s (Kouzes & Posner, 1997). The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership are as follows: (a) model the way (search for opportunities and experiment and take risks); (b) inspire a shared vision (envision the future and enlist the support of others); (c) challenge the process (foster collaboration and strengthen others); (d) enable others to act (set the example and plan small wins); and (e) encourage the heart (recognize contributions and celebrate accomplishments) (Kouzes & Posner, 1997). The LPI-O measures 30 specific leadership traits and behaviors on a 10-point Likert scale allowing participants to indicate the degree to which the leader behaves for each trait. There are six statements for each of the Five Exemplary Practices. These statements were scored on a 10-point Likert scale based upon the following responses: (1) almost never; (2) rarely (3) seldom; (4) once in a while; (5) occasionally; (6) sometimes; (7) fairly often; (8) usually; (9) very frequently; and (10) almost always (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Item numbers and statements correlated with each leadership practice are presented in Table 2. A letter was sent requesting permission to use LPI-O instrument (Appendix B). Permission was obtained from Wiley (Appendix C).

Table 2

Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (LPI-O)

Leadership Practice	Item #	Statement
Model the Way	1	Sets a personal example of what he/she expects of others
	6	Spends time and energy making certain that the people he/she works with adhere to the principles and standards that we have agreed on
	11	Follows through on promises and commitments he/she makes
	16	Asks for feedback on how his/her actions affect other people's performance
	21	Builds consensus around a common set of values for running our organization
	26	Is clear about his/her philosophy of leadership
Inspire a Vision	2	Talks about future trends that will influence how our work gets done
	7	Describes a compelling image of what our future can be like
	12	Appeals to others to share an exciting dream of the future
	17	Shows others how their long-term interests can be realized by enlisting in a common vision
	22	Paints the "big picture" of what we aspire to accomplish
	27	Speaks with genuine conviction about the higher meaning and purpose of our work
Challenge the Process	3	Seeks our challenging opportunities that test his/her own skills and abilities
	8	Challenges people try out new and innovative ways to do their work
	13	Searches outside the formal boundaries of his/her organization for innovative ways to improve what we do
	18	Asks "What can we learn?" when things don't go as expected
	23	Makes certain that we set achievable goals, make concrete plans, and establish measurable milestones for the projects and programs we work on
	28	Experiments and takes risks, even when there is a chance of failure
Enable Others to Act	4	Develops cooperative relationships among the people he/she works with
	9	Actively listens to diverse points of view
	14	Treats others with dignity and respect
	19	Supports the decisions that people make on their own

Table 2 (Cont'd)

Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (LPI-O)

Leadership Practice	Item #	Statement
	24	Gives people a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work
	29	Ensures that people grown in their jobs by learning new skills and developing themselves
Encouraging the Heart	5	Praises people for a job well done
	10	Makes it a point to let people know about his/her confidence in their abilities
	15	Makes sure that people are creatively rewarded for their contributions to the success of projects
	20	Publicly recognizes people who exemplify commitment to shared values
	25	Finds ways to celebrate accomplishments
	30	Gives the members of the team lots of appreciation and support for their contributions

Source: "Leadership Practices Inventory" (Kouzes & Posner, 1997)

The Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (LPI-O) instrument has been documented to be both as reliable and valid (Kouzes & Posner, 1993). Data from various studies have shown the LPI-O to have Cronbach alpha coefficients ranging from .70 to .91 with test-retest reliability at .93 in all five leadership practices (Kouzes & Posner, 1993). Alphas (internal reliabilities) of the LPI-O utilizing results from nearly 2.8 million participants (leaders $N = 475,891$ and observers $N = 2,322,764$) from 2007-2015 are contained in Table 3 (Posner, 2016).

Table 3
Cronbach Alphas for the LPI-O

Leadership Practice	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Challenging the Process	6	0.82

Inspiring the Vision	6	0.88
Enabling Others to Act	6	0.86
Modeling the Way	6	0.82
Encouraging the Heart	6	0.92

Note: N=37,248

Shared Decision Making Instrument

Ferrara developed an instrument titled the Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised (SEDS-R) after success of their first instrument, the Teacher Decision Making Instrument (TDI) (Ferrara & Repa, 1993). According to Ferrara and Repa (1993), SEDS-R is beneficial for "use by those on decision making councils at schools, including administrators, teachers, support staff, parents, community members, and school boards" (p. 72). This instrument measures teacher participation, both actual and desired, in shared decision making opportunities in their schools. The level of shared decision making was measured in 11 areas: planning, policy development, curriculum and instruction, student achievement, pupil personnel services, staff personnel services, school and community relations, parental involvement, staff development, budget management, and plant management (Ferrara & Repa, 1993). This instrument has a 6-point Likert scale from which participants may choose: (1) never; (2) rarely; (3) sometimes; (4) often; (5) usually; and (6) always (Ferrara, 1994). Item numbers correlated with each shared decision making dimension are presented in Table 4. A letter was sent requesting permission to use SEDS-R instrument to Dr. Repa (Appendix D) and Dr. Ferrara (Appendix E). Permission was obtained from Dr. Repa (Appendix F).

Table 4

Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised(SEDS-R)

Dimension	Item #
Planning	13-20

Policy Development	13-20
Curriculum & Instruction	21-28
Student Achievement	29-36
Pupil Personnel	37-43
Staff Personnel	44-57
School/Community Relations	58-64
Parental Involvement	65-69
Staff Development	70-74
Budget	75-86
Plant	87-95

The Shared Decision Making Survey–Revised has been utilized multiple times in research (Ferrara, 1992; Jennings, 2019; Leech & Fulton, 2007; Reynolds, 1996; Wooleyhand, 2012). The instrument has also been documented well both as reliable and valid. The Cronbach alphas for the Shared Education Decisions-Revised Survey range from .82 to .93 (Rogers, 1994). These reliabilities are reported in Table 5 (Ferrara, 1994).

Table 5
Cronbach Alphas for the SEDS-R

Decisional Dimension	Number of Items	Cronbach alphas
Planning	12	0.95

Policy Development	8	0.88
Curriculum and Instruction	8	0.94
Student Achievement	8	0.95
Pupil Personnel Services	7	0.85
Staff Personnel	14	0.93
School and Community Relations	7	0.86
Parental Involvement	5	0.90
Staff Development	5	0.95
Budget Management	12	0.95
Plant Management	9	0.86

Source: "Shared Decision Making Survey – Revised" (Ferrara, 1994)

Participant Demographic Questionnaire

Participants were asked to complete a Participant Demographic Questionnaire at the end of the survey. Information asked on the questionnaire was used to aid in the research and was only used when correlating data. No recording of any identifying personal information was gathered. Information gathered pertained to gender, ethnic/cultural background, grade(s) taught, years of experience, years at current school, highest degree earned, and involvement in shared decision making opportunities. The compilation of the information was only used to enable aggregation of data from each school.

Procedures

Upon approval from Valdosta State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Appendix A), an invitation was sent to each of the 12 school superintendents in the Coastal Plains RESA district for participation in this study. They were contacted via email and provided the Superintendent's Information Letter (Appendix G) and a Statement of Consent to Participate in the Study (Appendix H) for them to sign if they chose for their system to participate. Eleven of the 12 superintendents responded and were willing for the schools in their systems to participate in the research study. One

superintendent, however, explained though he would have been willing for his system to participate neither the middle nor the high school met the requirement of the principal having at least two years of service and therefore was disqualified from the study. One superintendent did not respond to any communication efforts. Once consent was given by the superintendents, principals who qualified to participate from the middle and high schools were contacted via email and provided with a Principal's Information Letter (Appendix I) and a Statement of Consent to Participate in the Study form (Appendix J). Emails were also sent to each principal providing the IRB information and approval regarding the study and an explanation of the purpose of the study (Appendix K). All superintendents and principals were informed that all responses to the survey instruments would remain confidential and anonymous. A total of 5 middle school principals and 3 high school principals declined participation in this study.

The researcher met with principals and provided each of them an envelope containing the Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (Appendix L), the Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised (Appendix M), and the Participant Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix N). The surveys were distributed and administered to each participating middle school (grades 6-8), junior high school (grades 8-9), and high school (grades 9-12) faculty in one of four ways: (1) during a faculty meeting, (2) during a grade group meeting, (3) during a professional development session, or (4) placed in faculty mailboxes. Surveys distributed to teachers had the Valdosta State University's Internal Review Board Research Statement Survey form attached (Appendix K). Several principals required teachers to initial a sign-off sheet when surveys were completed and

returned. The researcher requested not to have access to the sign-in sheets as the surveys were designed to be completely anonymous and confidential.

It was determined through a pilot test given to several teachers whose school was not part of the study that completion of both surveys and the demographic questionnaire would take between 25-30 minutes. With this in mind, the researcher allowed three weeks for completion.

Participants were required to check "yes" on the informed consent form in the form of a check mark prior to beginning the survey. No initials or signatures were obtained as the surveys were to remain anonymous and confidential. Through this step, the researcher was guaranteed informed consent of all participants. To ensure all participant responses remain anonymous, the researcher explained that no identifying information was requested on the survey or demographic questionnaire.

Originally, both instruments along with the participant demographic questionnaire were distributed in hard copy form to 12 middle schools, one junior high school, and nine high schools whose principals provided permission for their faculties to participate in the study. Teachers were asked to complete both surveys and the participant demographic questionnaire, fold each, place them in a sealed envelope and return it to the person collecting completed surveys. This would ensure no identifying information was collected from any participant and all responses were anonymous.

However, with the COVID-19 outbreak and government mandated school closures many teachers were unable to complete the surveys. Of the principals who received the hard copy surveys, only two middle schools, one junior high school and one high school were able to complete the survey prior to school closings and the researcher

collected them. Upon permission from the authors of the LPI-O and the SEDS-R, the surveys were uploaded on Qualtrics, an electronic platform. The researcher used the web-based research tool, Qualtrics, through Valdosta State University to distribute the surveys. An electronic link was provided to those principals via email whose faculties were unable to participate in the study using hard copy surveys. So not to duplicate any responses, the researcher was deliberate in not sending a link of the electronic survey to principals whose faculties were able to complete and return the hard copy surveys. Principals who received the survey link via email were informed that all participants in the study would remain completely anonymous and there was no identifying information asked on the surveys. The researcher assured all principals that the tracking of IP addresses was disabled and the only identifying information was a school code given to each faculty to aid in aggregation of data from each school. These teachers were also allowed three weeks for completion. All surveys, whether hard copy or electronic had attached a letter describing the study, directions on how to complete the survey, and a place for participants to check for informed consent for participation (as set forth by Valdosta State University's Internal Review Board for the Protection of Human Research Participants). As surveys were collected from each school, a hand-written thank you card was provided for the principal and faculty. An email was also sent to all principals reminding them that results and summary from the surveys would be provided to them.

All information was entered into Qualtrics to collect and monitor data. Hard copy surveys remained in a locked safe at the residence of the researcher and the researcher was the only one with access to the locked safe. All data recorded through Qualtrics

were stored on an encrypted drive to which the researcher alone had access. All information was destroyed one the study was complete, as per IRB specifications.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data for this study were analyzed using *SPSS 26*. Frequency and percentages were used to analyze demographic data gathered through the SEDS-R and the Participant Demographic Questionnaire, and descriptive statistics were generated for the LPI-O and SEDS-R. Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated for each instrument to determine their internal reliabilities and factor analyses were conducted for each instrument to determine if the measured subscales for each instrument (five leader behavior/traits for the LPI-O and 11 decisional dimensions on the SEDS-R) were correlated or independent of each other.

In order to explore any differences in SEDS-R responses between teachers who did and those who did not participate in shared decision making processes in their schools, independent means *t*-tests were calculated to compare each dimension of the SEDS-R in those groups. A confidence interval of 95% was used for the mean difference, with assumption of equal variances, between those who participated and those who did not participate in shared decision making opportunities in their schools. A Cohen's *d* was calculated for each to determine its practical significance.

Pearson product-moment correlation was utilized. Correlations were generated using all participants' responses for each subquestion to determine if a relationship exists between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in each areas and each of the five practices on the LPI, and if so, the strength of that relationship. A second set of Pearson product-moment correlations were generated for those teachers who indicated

participation in shared decision making opportunities by comparing each dimension of SEDS-R and each subscale of the LPI-O. The data from Pearson product-moment correlations for those teachers who indicated participation in shared decision making opportunities were used to determine if different levels of relationships were reported by teachers who participate and the group all participants.

According to Fink (1995), strength of correlations is operationally defined as (a) 0 to .25 indicates "little to no relationship", (b) .26 to .50 indicates "fair degree of relationship", (c) .51 to .75 indicates "moderate to good relationship", and (d) over .75- "very good to excellent relationship" (p. 36). Effect size and level of practical significance were defined as .1 weak, .3 moderate, and .5 strong (Cohen, 1988). All statistical significances in this study were tested at the .05 level of significance.

Summary

This study attempted to answer the question "To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools as perceived by teachers?" A purposeful sampling was drawn from data collected from teachers whose principals have been in their current leadership role for two or more years. Data were obtained through the Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (LPI-Observer) the Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised (SEDS-R), and a Participant Demographic Questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, independent means *t*-tests, and Pearson product-moment correlations were generated. Data were analyzed using *SPSS* 26.

Chapter 4 presents data collected from teachers throughout selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools. Data analyses, findings, and accompanying data tables were presented.

Chapter IV

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this correlational research study was to determine if a relationship exists between teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behavior and the level of shared decision making practiced in selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools in the Coastal Plains RESA District. Providing shared decision making opportunities among faculties is one pathway educators can increase the quality of decisions, improve the teacher's acceptance and implementations of the decisions, as well as boost staff morale and teamwork, engender trust, and possibly enhance school effectiveness (Liontos, 1993). The focus of the study was to examine principal's leadership behaviors and shared decision making opportunities provided to teachers in secondary schools. Data were obtained through two surveys. The first survey examined the five exemplary practices identified in Kouzes and Posner's (1997) Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer. The second survey examined perceptions of shared decision making through Ferrara's (1994) Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised. A Participant Demographic Questionnaire was also included to aid in the research.

The overarching research question for this study was: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in selected Southeast Georgia schools as perceived by teachers? Eleven subquestions derived from the research question and were also examined through the study.

Subquestion 1: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of planning?

Subquestion 2: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of policy development?

Subquestion 3: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of curriculum/instruction?

Subquestion 4: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of student achievement?

Subquestion 5: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of pupil personnel services?

Subquestion 6: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of staff personnel services?

Subquestion 7: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of school/community relations?

Subquestion 8: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of parental involvement?

Subquestion 9: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of staff development?

Subquestion 10: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of budget management?

Subquestion 11: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of plant management?

The results of this analysis were presented solely based upon the findings of data collected through both the Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer and the Shared Education Decision Survey-Revised, and the Participant Demographic Questionnaire. Chapter 4 serves as the report of the participant demographics data analysis and findings.

Participants

Secondary school teachers (grades 6-12, excluding alternative schools) in the Coastal Plains RESA District were chosen to participate in this study and were selected through purposeful sampling. According to the Georgia Department of Education (2019), the Coastal Plains RESA District is one of 16 RESA districts that services school systems in the State of Georgia. The Coastal Plains RESA district is a rural district encompassing 12 school systems in 11 counties in Southeast Georgia. All 12 school

systems in the Coastal Plains RESA District were invited to participate in this study. One system did not qualify as both the middle school principal and the high school principal were serving in their first year. A middle school in another system did not qualify as the principal was also in her first year. One superintendent did not respond to requests for participation, therefore a middle and high school were unable to participate. Principals at two middle schools and one high school chose for their faculties not to participate in the study. Data from teachers in 20 secondary schools in 10 school systems are represented in this chapter.

Teachers from 10 middle schools, 1 junior high school, and 9 high schools in the Coastal Plains RESA district were administered the Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (LPI-O) and the Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised (SEDS-R) via hard copy and electronic forms. Included in the survey was the Participant Demographic Questionnaire. The survey instrument was given to 554 middle school teachers, 100 junior high school teachers, and 651 high school teachers representing 10 of the school systems in the Coastal Plains RESA district. A total of 1,305 teachers were administered the surveys and 453 (35%) of those teachers participated in the study and submitted it to the researcher. Of the 453 participants, 433 of the teachers completed the surveys in their entirety. A summary of the number and percentages of surveys distributed and returned is provided in Table 6.

Table 6
Surveys Distributed, Returned and Used

School Type	Distributed Schools	Distributed Survey	Surveys Returned Surveys	Surveys Returned %	Fully Completed Surveys	Fully Completed %
Middle School (6-8)	10	554	187	34	181	33
Junior High School (8-9)	1	100	85	85	80	80
High School (9-12)	9	651	181	29	172	26
Total	20	1305	453	35	433	33

A Participant Demographic Questionnaire was included in the survey packet. This questionnaire measured specifics such as gender, ethnicity, grade level, years of experience as a teacher, years at current school, highest educational level attained, and opportunity to participate in a shared decision making group. Tables 7 through 13 summarize the elements of participant demographic data in this study.

Table 7
Participant Sample by Gender

Gender	Survey Participants n	Survey Participants %
Female	312	72.1
Male	118	27.3
No Response	3	0.6
Total	433	100

Table 8
Participant Sample by Ethnic/Cultural Background

Ethnic/Cultural Background	Survey Participants n	%
Asian	4	0.9
Black/African	62	14.3
Caucasian	335	77.4
Hispanic/Latino	11	2.5
Mixed Race	4	0.9
Other	11	2.6
No Response	6	1.4
Total	433	100

Table 9

Participant Sample by School Type

School Type	Survey Participants n	%
Middle School (6-8)	181	41.6
Jr. High (7-9)	80	18.5
High School (9-12)	172	39.3
No Response	0	0.6
Total	433	100

Table 10

Participant Sample by Number of Years Teaching

Teaching Experience	Survey Participants n	%
1-10 years	150	34.7
11-15 years	101	23.3
16-20 years	56	13.0
21-25 years	52	12.0
More than 25 years	63	14.5
No Response	11	2.5
Total	433	100

Table 11

Participant Sample by Number of Years at Current School

Years at Current School	Survey Participants n	%
1-10 years	304	70.2

11-15 years	64	14.8
16-20 years	26	6.0
21-25 years	17	3.9
More than 25 years	13	3.0
No Response	9	2.1
Total	433	100

Table 12

Participant Sample by Highest Degree Earned

Highest Degree Earned	Survey Participants	
	n	%
Bachelors	125	28.9
Masters	176	40.6
Specialist	90	20.8
Doctorate	12	2.8
Other (ABD)	23	5.3
No Response	7	1.6
Total	433	100

Table 13

Participant Sample by Involvement in Shared Decision Making Opportunities

Shared Decision Making Opportunities	Survey Participants	
	n	%
Yes	306	70.6
No	118	27.3
No Response	9	2.1
Total	433	100

The following profile summary represents responses from the demographic portion of the survey (Tables 6-12). Approximately 97.5% of participants completed the demographic portion of the survey. Approximately 2.5% of participants chose not to respond to all items in the demographic section, yet their responses are included in the total sample for this portion of the study.

The majority of the participants in this study were female (72.1%) while 27.3% were male. Less than1% of participants chose not to disclose their gender. 77.4% of participants were Caucasian, compared to 0.9% Asian, 14.3% Black/African American, and 2.5% Hispanic/Latino. 0.9% of participants selected "Mixed Race" while 2.6% selected "Other" for their Ethnic/Cultural Background. Approximately 1.4% of participants chose not to respond to this question.

The majority of study participants (41.8%) were middle school (grades 6-8) teachers. Approximately one-third (34.7%) of the teachers have taught less than 10 years while only 26.5% have taught more than 20 years.

Nearly three-fourths (70.2%) of teachers have been in their current schools for less than 10 years. Only 6.9% of teachers have been in their school over 20 years.

The majority of participants (40.6%) responded that they had their master's degree while 28.9% had their bachelor's degree. Only 2.8% of teachers had earned their doctorate and 1.6% did not respond.

The last question on the demographic survey related closest to this study. The question yielded data regarding teachers' participation in shared decision making opportunities. Nearly three-fourths (70.6%) of teachers responded either they are or have been involved in shared decision making opportunities in their schools. Approximately 30% indicated they have either never been involved in a shared decision making opportunity or chose not to respond to the question.

Data Analyses and Findings

The findings in this study depended greatly upon the validity and reliability of the two surveys utilized. The first survey measured the leader behaviors with the LPI-O and

the second measured the levels of shared decision making in a variety of areas with the SEDS-R. A Cronbach Alpha Coefficient was obtained for each behavior and shared decision dimension for the instruments. Previous studies, as mentioned in chapter three, showed alphas to range from .86 to .92 for LPI-O (Posner, 2016) and .82 to .93 for SEDS-R (Ferrara, 1994). Other studies indicated internal reliabilities ranging from .70 to .91 regarding LPI-O practices (Kouzes & Posner, 1997) and .82 to .93 (Rogers, 1994) and .86 to .95 (Ferrara, 1994) regarding SEDS-R dimensions.

The results of this study were consistent with Cronbach Alphas Coefficients reported by Kouzes and Posner 1993), Ferrara (1994), and Rogers (1994) though some alphas were slightly higher in various categories. Cronbach Alpha Coefficients for the LPI-O in this study ranged from .90 to .94 and are summarized in Table 14.

Table 14
Internal Reliabilities for LPI-O Administered in Select Secondary Schools in South Georgia's Coastal Plains RESA District

Leadership Practice/Trait	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha Coefficient
Model the Way	6	.91
Inspire a Shared Vision	6	.92
Challenge the Process	6	.92
Enable Other to Act	6	.93
Encourage the Heart	6	.94

$N = 433$

The results of this study were mostly consistent with alphas reported by Ferrara, .86 to .95 (Ferrara, 1994) regarding SEDS-R dimensions, though some alphas were a slightly higher while others were slightly lower in various categories. Cronbach Alpha Coefficients for the SEDS-R in this study ranged from .86 to .97 and are summarized in Table 15.

Table 15
Internal Reliabilities for SEDS-R Administered in Select Secondary

Schools in South Georgia's Coastal Plains RESA District

Decisional Dimension	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha Coefficient
Planning	12	0.96
Policy Development	8	0.91
Curriculum & Instruction	8	0.91
Student Achievement	8	0.92
Pupil Personnel	7	0.86
Staff Personnel	14	0.96
School/Community Relations	7	0.91
Parental Involvement	5	0.88
Staff Development	5	0.95
Budget Management	12	0.97
Plant Management	9	0.97

$N = 433$

A factor analysis using the method of principal comparison was also conducted for each instrument. These tests were used to determine if the measured subscales for each instrument (five leader behavior/traits for LPI-O and 11 decisional dimensions on the SEDS-R) were correlated or independent of each other.

The factor analysis for the five leader practices measured by the LPI-O revealed a high level of multicollinearity and high intercorrelations between each practice. Any one practice accounted for 91% of the variance. Intercorrelations ranged between .884 and .940.

The factor analysis for the 11 shared decision making dimensions measured on the SEDS-R also revealed a high level of multicollinearity and high correlations between each dimension. Any one dimension accounted for 80.7% of the variance. Intercorrelations ranged between .772 and .884.

With high levels of multicollinearity and high correlations revealed for both instruments administered in this study, it is possible that the subscales assessing the five leadership practices and shared decision making dimensions may in fact be measuring

similar leadership behaviors and shared decision making dimensions. Having obtained this information, the researcher chose not to employ multiple regressions based upon the premise that "…statistically, high multicollinearity also lowers the reliability of the effects demonstrated by regression analysis" (Leech, 1999). Therefore, measurements were only found using Pearson *r* correlations.

Data were collected using two survey instruments, the Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (LPI-O) and the Shared Education Decision Making Survey-Revised (SEDS-R). The results of both surveys are presented below.

The LPI-O survey was completed by 433 teachers in the Coastal Plains RESA district, composing of middle school (181), junior high (80), and high school (172) teachers. Participants were instructed to score their principals' observed behaviors on a scale of 1 to 10. Results of survey responses ranged from $M = 8.18$ ($SD = 1.68$) to $M = 8.39$ ($SD = 1.75$). The highest leader practices identified in this study are enable others to act (*M = 8.39, SD = 1.75*) followed by encourage the heart (*M = 8.28, SD = 1.83*) and inspire a shared vision (*M = 8.26, SD = 1.65*). The lowest leader practices identified in this study are model the way (*M = 8.22, SD = 1.70*) and challenge the process (*M = 8.18, SD = 1.68*). The survey results for the LPI-O are summarized in Table 16.

Table 16
Summary of Descriptive Statistics for the Leader Practices Inventory - Observer

Leader Behavior	*N*	*Min*	*Max*	*Mean*	*SD*
Model the Way	433	1.00	10.00	8.22	1.70
Inspire a Shared Vision	433	1.00	10.00	8.26	1.65
Challenge the Process	433	1.00	10.00	8.18	1.68
Enable Others to Act	433	1.00	10.00	8.39	1.75
Encourage the Heart	433	1.00	10.00	8.28	1.83

Note: Leader Practices Inventory-Observer, Kouzes & Posner, 1997.

The participants also completed the SEDS-R survey. They were instructed to indicate how frequently they perceived their involvement in the 11 dimensions of shared decision making on a scale of 1 to 6. Results of survey responses ranged from $M = 1.54$ ($SD = 1.13$) to $M = 3.02$ ($SD = 1.13$). The highest dimensions identified in this study are pupil personnel services (*M = 3.02, SD = 1.13*), curriculum and instruction (*M = 2.90, SD = 1.30*), and student achievement (*M = 2.74, SD = 1.31*). The lowest dimensions identified in this study are staff personnel services (*M = 1.81, SD = 1.10*), budget management (*M = 1.64, SD = 1.14*), and plant management (*M = 1.54, SD = 1.13*). The data for the SEDS-R survey are summarized in Table 17.

Table 17

Summary of Descriptive Statistics for the Shared Education Decision Making Survey-Revised

Leader Behavior	*N*	*Min*	*Max*	*Mean*	*SD*
Planning	433	1	6	2.56	1.28
Policy Development	433	1	6	2.34	1.22
Curriculum/Instruction	433	1	6	2.9	1.3
Student Achievement	433	1	6	2.74	1.31
Pupil Personnel Services	433	1	6	3.02	1.13
School Community	433	1	6	2.23	1.15
Parental Involvement	433	1	6	2.11	1.17
Staff Development	433	1	6	2.01	1.27
Budget Management	433	1	6	1.64	1.14
Plant Management	433	1	6	1.54	1.13

Note: Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised, Ferrara, 1994.

Independent means *t*-tests were conducted to compare the 11 areas of the SEDS-R in those who responded they participated in shared decision making opportunities and those who responded they did not participate in shared decision making opportunities in their schools. Results of these *t*-tests are discussed for each of the decision making areas in the Analysis by Question section. Table 18 presents a summary of the findings for the 11 independent means *t*-tests.

Table 18

Summary of Independent Means t-tests Comparing SEDS-R Areas with Participants and Non-Participants in SDM Opportunities

SEDS-R Area	SDM		Non-SDM		*t*(422)	*p*	95% CI		*d*
	M	SD	M	SD			*LL*	*UL*	
Planning	2.80	1.23	1.95	1.16	6.44	<.001*	0.59	1.10	0.71
Policy Develop.	2.49	1.25	1.93	1.02	4.33	<.001*	0.30	0.81	0.49
Curr/Instruct	3.10	1.28	2.36	1.18	5.40	<.001*	0.47	1.00	0.60
Student Achieve	2.92	1.30	2.24	1.17	4.98	<.001*	0.41	0.95	0.55
Pupil Personnel	3.20	1.10	2.53	1.03	5.66	<.001*	0.43	0.89	0.63
Staff Personnel	1.92	1.10	1.47	0.97	3.85	<.001*	0.22	0.67	0.43
School/Comm	2.35	1.14	1.89	1.04	3.77	<.001*	0.22	0.69	0.42

Table 18 (Cont'd)

Summary of Independent Means t-tests Comparing SEDS-R Areas with Participants and Non-Participants in SDM Opportunities

SEDS-R Area	SDM		Non-SDM		*t*(422)	*p*	95% CI		*d*
	M	SD	M	SD			*LL*	*UL*	
Parental Involv.	2.25	1.18	1.70	1.03	4.47	<.001*	0.31	0.79	0.50
Staff Develop	2.16	1.27	1.57	1.10	4.42	<.001*	0.33	0.85	0.50
Budget Manage	1.72	1.17	1.37	1.00	2.81	0.004*	0.11	0.59	0.32
Plant Manage	1.61	1.17	1.33	0.09	2.40	0.019*	0.46	0.52	0.26

Note. CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL* = upper limit. *$p < .05$

Analysis by Question

The overarching research question for this study was: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals (grades 6-12) and the level of shared decision making in selected Southeast Georgia schools as perceived by teachers? Eleven subquestions derived from the research question and were examined through the study.

Subquestion 1: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of planning?

Pearson product-moment correlations were generated by comparing the SEDS-R Planning dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of planning. Table 19 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 19
Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Planning and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O

Leadership Practice/Trait	Planning
Model the Way	.275**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.249**
Challenge the Process	.247**
Enable Others to Act	.244**
Encourage the Heart	.229**

Note. $N = 433$, $^{**}p < .01$

Five statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision

making opportunities in the area of planning. The first relationship was between modeling the way and planning, $r = .275$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and planning, $r = .249$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The third relationship was between challenging a process and planning, $r = .247$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The fourth relationship was between enabling others to act and planning, $r = .244$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The last relationship was between encouraging the heart and planning, $r = .229$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. All five correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of planning. Though the correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 level, a Pearson *r* of .2 has a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

An independent means *t*-test was conducted to compare the SEDS-R area of planning in those who participate in shared decision making and those who do not participate in shared decision making. The results of the independent *t*-test revealed that there was a significant difference in the SEDS-R area of planning in the scores for those who participate in shared decision making ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 1.23$) and those who do not participate in shared decision making ($M = 1.95$, $SD = 1.16$); $t(422) = 6.44$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.71$, 95% CI [0.58, 1.10]. Cohen's *d* with a value of $d = 0.71$ revealed a strong practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

A second set of Pearson product-moment correlations were generated for those indicating participation in shared decision making opportunities by comparing the SEDS-R Planning dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the principal while

the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of planning. Table 20 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 20
Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Planning and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O for SDM Participation

Leadership Practice/Trait	Planning
Model the Way	.225**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.205**
Challenge the Process	.204**
Enable Others to Act	.210**
Encourage the Heart	.181**

Note. $N = 306$, $^{**}p < .01$

Five statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of planning. The first relationship was between modeling the way and planning, $r = .225$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and planning, $r = .205$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The third relationship was between challenging a process and planning, $r = .204$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The fourth relationship was between enabling others to act and planning, $r = .210$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The last relationship was between encouraging the heart and planning, $r = .181$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. All five correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of planning. Though the correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 level, a Pearson *r* of .1-.2 has a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 2: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of policy development?

Pearson product-moment correlations were generated by comparing the SEDS-R Policy Development dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of policy development. Table 21 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 21

Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Policy Development and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O

Leadership Practice/Trait	Policy Development
Model the Way	.225**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.199**
Challenge the Process	.197**
Enable Others to Act	.179**
Encourage the Heart	.180**

Note. $N = 433$, ** $p < .01$

Five statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of policy development. The first relationship was between modeling the way and policy development, $r = .225$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and policy development, $r = .199$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The third relationship was between challenging a process and policy development, $r = .197$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The fourth relationship was between enabling others to act and policy development, $r = .179$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. And the last relationship was between encouraging the heart and policy development, $r = .180$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. All five correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of policy development. Though the correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 level, a Pearson *r* of .1-.2 has a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

An independent means *t*-test was conducted to compare the SEDS-R area of policy development in those who participate in shared decision making and those who do not participate in shared decision making. The results of the independent *t*-test revealed that there was a significant difference in the SEDS-R area of policy development in the scores for those who participate in shared decision making ($M = 2.49$, $SD = 1.25$) and those who do not participate in shared decision making ($M = 1.93$, $SD = 1.02$); $t(422) = 4.33$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.49$, 95% CI [0.30, 0.81]. Cohen's *d* with a value of $d = 0.49$ revealed a moderate-strong practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

A second set of Pearson product-moment correlations were generated for those indicating participation in shared decision making opportunities by comparing the SEDS-

R Policy Development dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of policy development. Table 22 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 22

Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Policy Development and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O for SDM Participation

Leadership Practice/Trait	Policy Development
Model the Way	.199**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.181**
Challenge the Process	.173**
Enable Others to Act	.154**
Encourage the Heart	.143*

Note. $N = 306$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < .01$

Five statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of policy development. The first relationship was between modeling the way and policy development, $r = .199$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and policy development, $r = .181$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The third relationship was between challenging a process and policy development, $r = .173$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The fourth relationship was between enabling others to act and policy development, $r = .154$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. And the last relationship was between encouraging the heart and policy development, $r = .143$,

$p < .05$, $N = 306$. All five correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of policy development. Though four of the correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 level and one correlation was statistically significant at the 0.05 level, a Pearson *r* of .1 has a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 3: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of curriculum/instruction?

Pearson product-moment correlations were generated by comparing the SEDS-R Curriculum & Instruction dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of curriculum/instruction. Table 23 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 23
Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Curriculum & Instruction and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O

Leadership Practice/Trait	Curriculum & Instruction
Model the Way	.305**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.286**
Challenge the Process	.278**
Enable Others to Act	.293**
Encourage the Heart	.262**

Note. $N = 433$, $^{**}p < .01$

Five statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making

opportunities in the area of curriculum/instruction. The first relationship was between modeling the way and planning, $r = .305$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and curriculum/instruction, $r = .286$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The third relationship was between challenging a process and curriculum/instruction, $r = .278$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The fourth relationship was between enabling others to act and curriculum/instruction, $r = .293$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. And the last relationship was between encouraging the heart and curriculum/instruction, $r = .262$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. All five correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of curriculum/instruction. Though the correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 level, a Pearson *r* of .2-.3 has a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

An independent means *t*-test was conducted to compare the SEDS-R area of curriculum and instruction in those who participate in shared decision making and those who do not participate in shared decision making. The results of the independent *t*-test revealed that there was a significant difference in the SEDS-R area of curriculum and instruction in the scores for those who participate in shared decision making ($M = 3.10$, $SD = 1.28$) and those who do not participate in shared decision making ($M = 2.36$, $SD = 1.18$); $t(422) = 5.40$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.60$, 95% CI [0.47, 0.99]. Cohen's *d* with a value of $d = 0.60$ revealed a strong practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

A second set of Pearson product-moment correlations were generated for those indicating participation in shared decision making opportunities by comparing the SEDS-R Curriculum & Instruction dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the

Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of curriculum/instruction. Table 24 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 24

Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Curriculum & Instruction and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O for SDM Participation

Leadership Practice/Trait	Curriculum & Instruction
Model the Way	.268**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.250**
Challenge the Process	.233**
Enable Others to Act	.257**
Encourage the Heart	.183**

Note. $N = 306$, $^{**}p < .01$

Five statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of curriculum/instruction. The first relationship was between modeling the way and planning, $r = .268$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and curriculum/instruction, $r = .250$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The third relationship was between challenging a process and curriculum/instruction, $r = .233$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The fourth relationship was between enabling others to act and curriculum/instruction, $r = .257$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. And the last relationship was between encouraging the heart and curriculum/instruction, $r = .183$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. All five correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of curriculum/instruction. Though the

correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 level, a Pearson *r* of .1-.2 has a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 4: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of student achievement?

Pearson product-moment correlations were generated by comparing the SEDS-R Student Achievement dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of student achievement. Table 25 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 25

Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Student Achievement and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O

Leadership Practice/Trait	Student Achievement
Model the Way	.281**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.272**
Challenge the Process	.263**
Enable Others to Act	.269**
Encourage the Heart	.243**

Note. $N = 433$, $^{**}p < .01$

Five statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of student achievement. The first relationship was between

modeling the way and student achievement, $r = .281$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and student achievement, $r = .272$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The third relationship was between challenging a process and student achievement, $r = .263$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The fourth relationship was between enabling others to act and student achievement, $r = .269$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. And the last relationship was between encouraging the heart and student achievement, $r = .243$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. All five correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of student achievement. Though the correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 level, a Pearson *r* of .2 has a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

An independent means *t*-test was conducted to compare the SEDS-R area of student achievement in those who participate in shared decision making and those who do not participate in shared decision making. The results of the independent *t*-test revealed that there was a significant difference in the SEDS-R area of student achievement in the scores for those who participate in shared decision making ($M = 2.92$, $SD = 1.30$) and those who do not participate in shared decision making ($M = 2.24$, $SD = 1.17$); $t(422) = 4.98$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.55$, 95% CI [0.41, 0.95]. Cohen's *d* with a value of $d = 0.55$ revealed a strong practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

A second set of Pearson product-moment correlations were generated for those indicating participation in shared decision making opportunities by comparing the SEDS-R Student Achievement dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the

principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of student achievement. Table 26 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 26

Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Student Achievement and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O for SDM Participation

Leadership Practice/Trait	Student Achievement
Model the Way	.255**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.251**
Challenge the Process	.246**
Enable Others to Act	.242**
Encourage the Heart	.193**

Note. $N = 306$, $^{**}p < .01$

Five statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of student achievement. The first relationship was between modeling the way and student achievement, $r = .255$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and student achievement, $r = .251$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The third relationship was between challenging a process and student achievement, $r = .246$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The fourth relationship was between enabling others to act and student achievement, $r = .242$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. And the last relationship was between encouraging the heart and student achievement, $r = .193$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. All five correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of student

achievement. Though the correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 level, a Pearson *r* of .1-.2 has a weak to weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 5: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of pupil personnel services?

Pearson product-moment correlations were generated by comparing the SEDS-R Pupil Personnel Services dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of pupil personnel services. Table 27 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 27
Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Pupil Personnel and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O

Leadership Practice/Trait	Pupil Personnel
Model the Way	.309**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.287**
Challenge the Process	.295**
Enable Others to Act	.293**
Encourage the Heart	.275**

Note. $N = 433$, $^{**}p < .01$

Five statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of pupil personnel services. The first relationship was between

modeling the way and pupil personnel services, $r = .309$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and pupil personnel services, $r = .287$, $p < .01$, N=433. The third relationship was between challenging a process and pupil personnel services, $r = .295$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The fourth relationship was between enabling others to act and pupil personnel services, $r = .293$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. And the last relationship was between encouraging the heart and pupil personnel services, $r = .275$, $p < .01$, N =433. All five correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of pupil personnel services. Though the correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 level, a Pearson *r* of .2-.3 has a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

An independent means *t*-test was conducted to compare the SEDS-R area of pupil personnel services in those who participate in shared decision making and those who do not participate in shared decision making. The results of the independent *t*-test revealed that there was a significant difference in the SEDS-R area of pupil personnel services in the scores for those who participate in shared decision making ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 1.10$) and those who do not participate in shared decision making ($M = 2.53$, $SD = 1.03$); $t(422) = 5.66$, $p < .001$. $d = 0.63$, 95% CI [0.43, 0.90]. Cohen's *d* with a value of $d = 0.63$ revealed a strong practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

A second set of Pearson product-moment correlations were generated for those indicating participation in shared decision making opportunities by comparing the SEDS-R Pupil Personnel Services dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits

of the principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of pupil personnel services. Table 28 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 28

Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Pupil Personnel and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O for SDM Participation

Leadership Practice/Trait	Pupil Personnel
Model the Way	.311**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.284**
Challenge the Process	.297**
Enable Others to Act	.300**
Encourage the Heart	.254**

Note. $N = 306$, $^{**}p < .01$

Five statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of pupil personnel services. The first relationship was between modeling the way and pupil personnel services, $r = .311$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and pupil personnel services, $r = .284$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The third relationship was between challenging a process and pupil personnel services, $r = .297$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The fourth relationship was between enabling others to act and pupil personnel services, $r = .300$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. And the last relationship was between encouraging the heart and pupil personnel services, $r = .254$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. All five correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of

pupil personnel services. Though the correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 level, a Pearson *r* of .2-.3 has a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 6: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of staff personnel services?

Pearson product-moment correlations were generated by comparing the SEDS-R Staff Personnel Services dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of staff personnel services. Table 29 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 29
Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Staff Personnel and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O

Leadership Practice/Trait	Staff Personnel
Model the Way	.129**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.125**
Challenge the Process	.116*
Enable Others to Act	.110*
Encourage the Heart	.109*

Note. $N = 433$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Five statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of staff personnel services. The first relationship was between modeling the way and staff personnel services, $r = .129$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The second

relationship was between inspiring a vision and staff personnel services, $r = .125$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The third relationship was between challenging a process and staff personnel services, $r = .116$, $p < .05$, $N = 433$. The fourth relationship was between enabling others to act and staff personnel services, $r = .110$, $p < .05$, $N = 433$. And the last relationship was between encouraging the heart and staff personnel services, $r = .109$, $p < .05$, $N = 433$. All five correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of staff personnel services. Though the correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 level, a Pearson *r* of .1 has a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

An independent means *t*-test was conducted to compare the SEDS-R area of staff personnel in those who participate in shared decision making and those who do not participate in shared decision making. The results of the independent *t*-test revealed that there was a significant difference in the SEDS-R area of staff personnel in the scores for those who participate in shared decision making ($M = 1.92$, $SD = 1.10$) and those who do not participate in shared decision making ($M = 1.47$, $SD = .97$); $t(422) = 3.85$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.43$, 95% CI [0.22, 0.67]. Cohen's *d* with a value of $d = 0.43$ revealed a moderate-strong practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

A second set of Pearson product-moment correlations were generated for those indicating participation in shared decision making opportunities by comparing the SEDS-R Staff Personnel Services dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making

opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of staff personnel services. Table 30 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 30

Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Staff Personnel and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O for SDM Participation

Leadership Practice/Trait	Staff Personnel
Model the Way	.112
Inspire a Shared Vision	.111
Challenge the Process	.105
Enable Others to Act	.092
Encourage the Heart	.062

Note. $N = 306$

There were no statistically significant relationships discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of staff personnel services for those indicating participation in shared decision making opportunities at the 0.01 or 0.05 levels. A Pearson *r* of .0-.1 has a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 7: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of school/community relations?

Pearson product-moment correlations were generated by comparing the SEDS-R School/Community Relations dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits

of the principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of school/community relations. Table 31 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 31
Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in School/Community Relations and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O

Leadership Practice/Trait	School/Community Relations
Model the Way	.220**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.204**
Challenge the Process	.204**
Enable Others to Act	.170**
Encourage the Heart	.180**

Note. $N = 433$, $^{**}p < .01$

Five statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of school/community relations. The first relationship was between modeling the way and school/community relations, $r = .220$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and school/community relations, $r = .204$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The third relationship was between challenging a process and school/community relations, $r = .204$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The fourth relationship was between enabling others to act and school/community relations, $r = .170$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. And the last relationship was between encouraging the heart and school/community relations, $r = .180$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. All five correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of school/community relations. Though the correlations were

statistically significant at the 0.01 level, a Pearson *r* of .1-.2 has a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

An independent means *t*-test was conducted to compare the SEDS-R area of school/community relations in those who participate in shared decision making and those who do not participate in shared decision making. The results of the independent *t*-test revealed that there was a significant difference in the SEDS-R area of school/community relations in the scores for those who participate in shared decision making ($M = 2.35$, $SD = 1.14$) and those who do not participate in shared decision making ($M = 1.89$, $SD = 1.04$); $t(422) = 3.77$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.42$, 95% CI [0.22, 0.69]. Cohen's *d* with a value of $d = 0.42$ revealed a moderate-strong practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

A second set of Pearson product-moment correlations were generated for those indicating participation in shared decision making opportunities by comparing the SEDS-R School/Community Relations dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of school/community relations. Table 32 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 32

Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in School/Community Relations and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O for SDM Participation

Leadership Practice/Trait	School/Community Relations
Model the Way	.196**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.184**
Challenge the Process	.178**
Enable Others to Act	.154**

Encourage the Heart	.139*

Note. $N = 433$, *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Five statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of school/community relations. The first relationship was between modeling the way and school/community relations, $r = .196$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and school/community relations, $r = .184$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The third relationship was between challenging a process and school/community relations, $r = .178$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The fourth relationship was between enabling others to act and school/community relations, $r = .154$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. And the last relationship was between encouraging the heart and school/community relations, $r = .139$, $p < .05$, $N = 306$. All five correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of school/community relations. Though the correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 and 0.05 levels, a Pearson *r* of .1 has a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 8: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of parental involvement?

Pearson product-moment correlations were generated by comparing the SEDS-R Parental Involvement dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the

principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of parental involvement. Table 33 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 33

Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Parental Involvement and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O

Leadership Practice/Trait	Parental Involvement
Model the Way	.209**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.204**
Challenge the Process	.205**
Enable Others to Act	.174**
Encourage the Heart	.182**

Note. $N = 433$, $^{**}p < .01$

Five statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of parental involvement. The first relationship was between modeling the way and parental involvement, $r = .209$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and parental involvement, $r = .204$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The third relationship was between challenging a process and parental involvement, $r = .205$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The fourth relationship was between enabling

others to act and parental involvement, $r = 174$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. And the last relationship was between encouraging the heart and parental involvement, $r = .182$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. All five correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of parental involvement. Though the correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 level, a Pearson *r* of .1-.2 has a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

An independent means *t*-test was conducted to compare the SEDS-R area of parental involvement in those who participate in shared decision making and those who do not participate in shared decision making. The results of the independent *t*-test revealed that there was a significant difference in the SEDS-R area of parental involvement in the scores for those who participate in shared decision making ($M = 2.25$, $SD = 1.18$) and those who do not participate in shared decision making ($M = 1.70$, $SD = 1.03$); $t(422) = 4.47$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.50$, 95% CI [0.31, 0.79]. Cohen's *d* with a value of $d = 0.50$ revealed a strong practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

A second set of Pearson product-moment correlations were generated for those indicating participation in shared decision making opportunities by comparing the SEDS-R Parental Involvement dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of parental involvement. Table 34 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 34

Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Parental Involvement and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O for SDM Participation

Leadership Practice/Trait	Parental Involvement
Model the Way	.200**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.202**
Challenge the Process	.196**
Enable Others to Act	.155**
Encourage the Heart	.150**

Note. $N = 306$, $^{**}p < .01$

Five statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of parental involvement. The first relationship was between modeling the way and parental involvement, $r = .200$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and parental involvement, $r = .202$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The third relationship was between challenging a process and parental involvement, $r = .196$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. The fourth relationship was between enabling others to act and parental involvement, $r = 155$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. And the last relationship was between encouraging the heart and parental involvement, $r = .150$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$. All five correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of parental involvement. Though the correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 level, a Pearson *r* of .1-.2 has a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 9: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of staff development?

Pearson product-moment correlations were generated by comparing the SEDS-R Staff Development dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of staff development. Table 35 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 35
Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Staff Development and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O

Leadership Practice/Trait	Staff Development
Model the Way	.160**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.143**
Challenge the Process	.146**
Enable Others to Act	.134**
Encourage the Heart	.142**

Note. $N = 433$, $^{**}p < .01$

Five statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of staff development. The first relationship was between modeling the way and staff development, $r = .160$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and staff development, $r = .143$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The third relationship was between challenging a process and staff development, $r = .146$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The fourth relationship was between enabling others to act and staff development, $r = .134$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. And the last relationship was between encouraging the heart and staff development, $r = .142$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. All five correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership

behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of staff development. Though the correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 level, a Pearson *r* of .1 has a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

An independent means *t*-test was conducted to compare the SEDS-R area of staff development in those who participate in shared decision making and those who do not participate in shared decision making. The results of the independent *t*-test revealed that there was a significant difference in the SEDS-R area of staff development in the scores for those who participate in shared decision making ($M = 2.16$, $SD = 1.27$) and those who do not participate in shared decision making ($M = 1.57$, $SD = 1.10$); $t(422) = 4.42$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.50$, 95% CI [0.33, 0.85]. Cohen's d with a value of $d = 0.50$ revealed a strong practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

A second set of Pearson product-moment correlations were generated for those indicating participation in shared decision making opportunities by comparing the SEDS-R Staff Development dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of staff development. Table 36 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 36

Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Staff Development and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O for SDM Participation

Leadership Practice/Trait	Staff Development
Model the Way	.130*
Inspire a Shared Vision	.114*

Challenge the Process	.123*
Enable Others to Act	.113*
Encourage the Heart	.089

Note. $N = 306$, $*p < .05$

Four statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of staff development. The first relationship was between modeling the way and staff development, $r = .130$, $p < .05$, $N = 306$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and staff development, $r = .114$, $p < .05$, $N = 306$. The third relationship was between challenging a process and staff development, $r = .123$, $p < .05$, $N = 306$. And the last relationship was between enabling others to act and staff development, $r = .113$, $p < .05$, $N = 306$. The four correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of staff development. Though the correlations were statistically significant at the 0.05 level, a Pearson r of .1 has a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 10: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of budget management?

Pearson product-moment correlations were generated by comparing the SEDS-R Budget Management dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the

principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of budget management. Table 37 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 37

Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Budget Management and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O

Leadership Practice/Trait	Budget Management
Model the Way	.128**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.125**
Challenge the Process	.112*
Enable Others to Act	.084
Encourage the Heart	.094

Note. $N = 433$, *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Three statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of budget management. The first relationship was between modeling the way and budget management, $r = .128$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and budget management, $r = .125$, $p < .01$, N=433. The last relationship was between challenging a process and budget management, $r = .112$, $p < .05$, $N = 433$. These three correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of budget management. Though the correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 level, a Pearson *r* of .1 has a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

An independent means *t*-test was conducted to compare the SEDS-R area of budget management in those who participate in shared decision making and those who do not participate in shared decision making. The results of the independent *t*-test revealed that there was a significant difference in the SEDS-R area of budget management in the scores for those who participate in shared decision making ($M = 1.72$, $SD = 1.17$) and those who do not participate in shared decision making ($M = 1.37$, $SD = 1.00$); $t(422) = 2.84$, $p = .004$, $d = 0.32$, 95% CI [0.11, 0.59]. Cohen's d with a value of $d = 0.32$ revealed a moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

A second set of Pearson product-moment correlations were generated for those indicating participation in shared decision making opportunities by comparing the SEDS-R Budget Management dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of budget management. Table 38 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 38

Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Budget Management and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O for SDM Participation

Leadership Practice/Trait	Budget Management
Model the Way	.095
Inspire a Shared Vision	.094
Challenge the Process	.085
Enable Others to Act	.057
Encourage the Heart	.043

Note. $N = 306$

There were no statistically significant relationships discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of budget management. A Pearson *r* of .1 has a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 11: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of plant management?

Pearson product-moment correlations were generated by comparing the SEDS-R Plant Management dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of plant management. Table 39 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 39
Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Plant Management and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O

Leadership Practice/Trait	Plant Management
Model the Way	.125**
Inspire a Shared Vision	.116*
Challenge the Process	.104*
Enable Others to Act	.078
Encourage the Heart	.099*

Note. $N = 433$, *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Four statistically significant positive, though weak, relationships were discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making

opportunities in the area of plant management. The first relationship was between modeling the way and plant management, $r = .125$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. The second relationship was between inspiring a vision and plant management, $r = .116$, $p < .05$, $N = 433$. The third relationship was between challenging a process and plant management, $r = .104$, $p < .05$, $N = 433$. The last relationship was between encouraging the heart and plant management, $r = .099$, $p < .05$, $N = 433$. All four correlations revealed a positive relationship between principal leadership behaviors/traits and the level of shared decision making in the area of plant management. Though the correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 level, a Pearson *r* of .1 has a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

An independent means *t*-test was conducted to compare the SEDS-R area of plant management in those who participate in shared decision making and those who do not participate in shared decision making. The results of the independent *t*-test revealed that there was a significant difference in the SEDS-R area of plant management in the scores for those who participate in shared decision making ($M = 1.61$, $SD = 1.17$) and those who do not participate in shared decision making ($M = 1.33$, $SD = 0.94$); $t(422) = 2.40$, $p = .019$, $d = 0.26$, 95% CI [0.05, 0.52]. Cohen's *d* with a value of $d = 0.26$ revealed a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

A second set of Pearson product-moment correlations were generated for those indicating participation in shared decision making opportunities by comparing the SEDS-R Plant Management dimension score to each subscale on the LPI-O: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The LPI subscale scores represented the leadership behaviors/traits of the

principal while the SEDS-R score represented the level of shared decision making opportunities perceived by the faculty in the specific area of plant management. Table 40 presents the correlation coefficients for each of the five variables.

Table 40

Correlations (r) Between the SEDS-R Level of Shared Decision Making in Plant Management and Each Leadership Practice on the LPI-O for SDM Participation

Leadership Practice/Trait	Plant Management
Model the Way	.079
Inspire a Shared Vision	.076
Challenge the Process	.078
Enable Others to Act	.034
Encourage the Heart	.045

Note. $N = 306$

There were no statistically significant relationships discovered between the principal's leadership behavior traits and the level of shared decision making opportunities in the area of budget management. A Pearson *r* of .0-.1 has a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Summary

The LPI-O and SEDS-R surveys provided data from 433 middle school, junior high, and high school teachers representing 20 schools (10 middle, 1 junior high, and 9 high schools) across the Coastal Plains RESA District in South Georgia. The LPI-O survey asked teachers to rate their principals using a Likert scale of 1-10 on 30 statements that focused on five leader behaviors or traits: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. The SEDS-R asked teachers to rate their opportunities to participate in shared decision making in their school. Using a Likert scale of 1-6, teachers responded to statements that focused on 11

dimensions of shared decision making: planning, policy development, curriculum and instruction, student achievement, pupil personnel services, staff personnel services, school and community relations, parental involvement, staff development, budget management, and plant management. These two surveys were correlated using Pearson (r) product-moment to allow the researcher to answer each of the 11subquestions which derived from the overarching research question, "To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in selected Southeast Georgia schools as perceived by teachers?"

Teachers were also asked to complete the demographic portion of the survey. This allowed the research to use descriptive statistics to present the demographics of the study's participants. The sample consisted of 433 participants in secondary schools from the Coastal Plains RESA District representing a 33% return rate of completed and usable surveys. The majority of the participants were Caucasian (77.4%) female (72.1%) middle school teachers (41.8%) who hold a Master's Degree (40.6%) and who have been teaching less than 15 years (58.0%). Many (70.6%) of these teachers responded they have participated in shared decision making opportunities.

Cronbach Alphas were used to validate the SEDS-R and the LPI-O internal reliabilities discussed in the literature review. These calculated reliabilities ranged from .722 to .884 with any one dimension accounting for 80.7% of the variance for the SEDS-R and .884 to .940 with any one dimension accounting for 91.0% of the variance for the LPI-O.

Independent means *t*-tests were conducted to compare the 11 areas of SEDS-R in those who responded they participated in shared decision making opportunities and those

who responded they did not participate in shared decision making opportunities in their schools. Results of these *t*-tests revealed significant differences between those who participated and those who did not participate in shared decision making opportunities in many areas on the SEDS-R. A strong practical significance was found in the areas of planning, curriculum and instruction, student achievement, pupil personnel services, parental involvement and staff development (Cohen, 1988). A moderate-strong significance was found in the areas of policy development, staff personnel services, and school/community relations (Cohen, 1988). A moderate significance was found in the area of budget management while a weak-moderate significance was found in plant management (Cohen, 1988).

Pearson product-moment correlations were generated to answer the 11 subquestions of the overarching research question. Fifty-five correlations were performed to examine the relationships between the principal's leadership behaviors and the level of shared decision making. A total of 52 significant relationships were identified at either the .01 or .05 level of significance. Though the majority of the correlations identified significant relationships, the strength of those relationships is considered weak. A Pearson *r* of .1-.3 has a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988). This reveals a minimal relationship between the teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behaviors and the level of shared decision making in their schools.

A second set of Pearson product-moment correlations were generated for those who had participated in shared decision making opportunities to answer the 11 subquestions of the overarching research question. Fifty-five correlations were

performed to examine the relationships between the principal's leadership behaviors and the level of shared decision making. A total of 39 significant relationships were identified at either the .01 or .05 level of significance. Though the majority of the correlations identified significant relationships, the strength of those relationships were considered weak. A Pearson *r* of .1-.3 has a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988). This reveals a minimal relationship between the teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behaviors and the level of shared decision making in their schools.

Chapter 4 presented a review of the study's research design, data collection, a description of the sample selected for the study, data analysis, and findings. Information was presented to describe the study sample and how the reliability of each instrument was measured.

Chapter 5 will provide an overview and description of the study, along with a summary of data analyses, discussion of findings, limitations, and recommendations for future research.

Chapter V

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

For more than thirty years, legislators and educators have worked to improve and reform education to make it more effective for all students (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). Various publications, initiatives, and legislations such as A Nation at Risk, No Child Left Behind, and Race to the Top have sought to reform and improve public education. Reforms efforts included organizational restructuring as well as curriculum and instructional changes to enhance the quality and effectiveness of public education.

The first wave of reform took a top-down approach while the second wave brought attention to the management and organizational structure within the schools. It was during this time researchers realized the principal was the key to successfully implementing school reform (Leech, 1999; Mortimore & Sammons, 1991). Leana (2011) and Maleyko & Gawlik (2011) each concurred with this revelation by reporting principals and teachers benefit from a school reform based on collaboration and shared governance. Researchers advocated that school reform included enhancing teacher involvement in school-based decisions.

More recently, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (U. S. Department of Education, 2002) legislation focused on testing and was data-driven. Next, the Race to the Top (RttT) (U. S. Department of Education, 2009) legislation focused on a competitive grant program that rewarded states for being innovative in reform efforts.

Both of these aimed to increase student achievement while decreasing the achievement gap. Both have had an impact on education and educational reform.

However, during this same amount of time, educational leadership has become more complex (Bass, 1990; Burns, 1978; Maxwell, 2007). Many leadership theories and models have turned from the top-down approach to more of a collaborative, hands-on approach of transactional, transformational, situational, shared, and servant leaderships (Avolio, 2007; Hershey-Blanchard, 1982; Horn-Turpin, 2009; Howell, 2001; Kouzes & Posner, 2012; Northouse, 2007). With a plethora of leadership styles, it has become more difficult to define and conceptualize educational leadership.

It has also been noted through research that teachers' perception of their leader's behavior plays a key role in the overall health of an organization. Teachers' perceptions, however, may or may not be aligned with the leader's self-perception which can lead to misinterpretations, a decline in the organization's health, and have a negative impact on that school's effectiveness (Bohn, 2002; Dabke, 2016; Lamb, 1985; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1996). Various studies revealed practices such as instructional leadership, honesty, inspiration, modeling the way, and enabling others were most important to teachers (Giannangelo & Malone, 1987; Leech, 1999; Richardson et al., 1992).

The purpose of this correlational study was to determine if a relationship existed between principals' leadership behaviors and shared decision making opportunities in schools as perceived by teachers. This study was not designed or intended to determine if a cause and effect relationship existed; instead it was designed only to explore possible relationships among the variables. The study was guided by one overarching research question: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of

secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in selected Southeast Georgia schools as perceived by teachers? This research question allowed for 11 subquestions to determine if a correlation existed between/among teacher perceptions of leader behavior and the level of shared decision making in select South Georgia secondary education schools:

Subquestion 1: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of planning?

Subquestion 2: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of policy development?

Subquestion 3: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of curriculum/instruction?

Subquestion 4: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of student achievement?

Subquestion 5: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of pupil personnel services?

Subquestion 6: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of staff personnel services?

Subquestion 7: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of school/community relations?

Subquestion 8: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of parental involvement?

Subquestion 9: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of staff development?

Subquestion 10: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of budget management?

Subquestion 11: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of plant management?

The concept of leader behavior directly impacts the reformation of schools and education (Yukl, Gordan, & Tabar, 2002). Teacher perceptions of their leader's behavior directly impacts the atmosphere, culture, and effectiveness of the school (Frasher & Frasher, 1981; Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; Katz & Kahn, 1978; Lamb, 1985). When leaders demonstrate traits that appeal to their followers, those followers were more willing to be influenced by them and support their agendas (Kenney, Blascovich, & Shaver, 1994). Investigating teachers' perception of their leader's behavior and opportunities for participation in shared decision making can provide today's school

leaders with valuable insight regarding school restructure and effectiveness. Through increased opportunities for shared decision making among teachers and administrators, it is possible for improved quality of decisions as well as improved faculty/staff morale, teamwork, and unity for a common goal or vision (Liontos, 1993).

Overview of the Study

Secondary teachers throughout the Coastal Plains RESA District in South Georgia were invited to respond to two surveys: Kouzes and Posner's Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (1997) and Ferrara's Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised (1994). There were 30 items on the LPI-O using a10-point Likert scale and 95 items on the SEDS-R using 6-point Likert scale. The collected data were categorized by three grade levels (middle school, junior high school, and high school) and measured the teachers' perception of their principals' leaders behaviors (model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart) along with shared decision making dimensions (planning, policy development, curriculum and instruction, student achievement, pupil personnel services, staff personnel services, school/community relations, parental involvement, staff development, budget management, and plant management).

The survey was disseminated to 1,305 teachers representing 20 secondary schools (grades 6-12) in the Coastal Plains RESA District of South Georgia. Of those teachers surveyed, 453 participated; however, only 433 fully completed the survey and therefore served as the sample of this study. The majority of respondents were female (72.1%) while 27.3% were male and 0.6% chose not to respond regarding gender. Middle school teachers comprised 41.8% of respondents while 39.7% were high school teachers and

18.5% were 8th and 9th grade teachers at the junior high school level. The majority of respondents (71.7%) have taught for at least 20 years and 61.4% hold a master's or specialist's degree. Almost a third (70.6%) of respondents indicated they have been involved in shared decision making opportunities at their schools and an overwhelming majority (85%) has been at their current schools for less than 15 years.

This study, using a correlational research design, utilized scale score data provided by the two survey instruments. The data indicated the degree each leadership behavior from the LPI-O was utilized by secondary school principals when associated with the 11 dimensions on the SEDS-R. Thirty questions, with six questions per behavior, were specifically associated to leader behavior traits. Ninety-five questions, covering the 11 shared decision making dimensions, were specifically associated with teachers' participation in each dimension.

A variety of statistical analyses were used to answer the research question and subquestions. Descriptive statistics were used to identify specific perceived leadership behaviors on the LPI-O and the level of teachers' participation in shared decision making opportunities on the SEDS-R. Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients were obtained for each leader behavior and shared decision making dimension for the LPI-O and SEDS-R, respectively. Additionally, a factor analysis using the method of principal comparison was conducted for each instrument to determine the level of multicollinearity and correlation between each behavior and each dimension.

Independent means *t*-tests were conducted to compare each dimension of the SEDS-R for those who participated in shared decision making and those who did not participate in shared decision making in their schools. Pearson product-moment

correlations were generated comparing each dimension of the SEDS-R with each of the five leader behaviors for all participants and a second set of Pearson product-moment correlations were generated comparing each dimension of the SEDS-R with each of the five leader behaviors for only those participants who indicated to have had shared decision making opportunities in their schools.

Data Analysis and Findings

Findings of this study were solely based on results of a principal leadership behavior survey and a shared decision making survey administered to middle, junior high, and high school teachers in the Coastal Plains RESA District of Southeast. Data were collected using two survey instruments, the Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (LPI-O) and the Shared Education Decision Making Survey-Revised (SEDS-R).

The LPI-O survey was completed by 433 teachers in the Coastal Plains RESA District. The sample consisted of 181 middle school, 80 junior high, and 172 high school teachers. Participants were instructed to score their principals' observed behaviors on a scale of 1 to 10. Results of survey responses ranged from $M = 8.18$ ($SD = 1.68$) to $M = 8.39$ ($SD = 1.75$). The highest leader practices identified in this study are enable others to act ($M = 8.39, SD = 1.75$) followed by encourage the heart ($M = 8.28, SD = 1.83$) and inspire a shared vision ($M = 8.26, SD = 1.65$). The lowest leader practices identified in this study are model the way ($M = 8.22, SD = 1.70$) and challenge the process ($M = 8.18, SD = 1.68$). The survey results for the LPI-O are summarized in Table 41.

Table 41
Summary of Descriptive Statistics for the Leader Practices Inventory-Observer

Leader Behavior	*N*	*Min*	*Max*	*Mean*	*SD*
Model the Way	433	1.00	10.00	8.22	1.70
Inspire a Shared Vision	433	1.00	10.00	8.26	1.65
Challenge the Process	433	1.00	10.00	8.18	1.68
Enable Others to Act	433	1.00	10.00	8.39	1.75
Encourage the Heart	433	1.00	10.00	8.28	1.83

Note: Leader Practices Inventory-Observer, Kouzes & Posner, 1997.

The participants also completed the SEDS-R survey. They were instructed to indicate how frequently they perceived their involvement in the 11 dimensions of shared decision making on a scale of 1 to 6. Results of survey responses ranged from $M = 1.54$ ($SD = 1.13$) to $M = 3.02$ ($SD = 1.13$). The highest dimensions identified in this study are pupil personnel services (*M = 3.02, SD = 1.13*), curriculum and instruction (*M = 2.90, SD = 1.30*), and student achievement (*M = 2.74, SD = 1.31*). The lowest dimensions identified in this study are staff personnel services (*M = 1.81, SD = 1.10*), budget management (*M = 1.64, SD = 1.14*), and plant management (*M = 1.54, SD = 1.13*). The data for the SEDS-R survey are summarized in Table 42.

Table 42
Summary of Descriptive Statistics for the Shared Education Decision Making Survey-Revised

Leader Behavior	*N*	*Min*	*Max*	*Mean*	*SD*
Planning	433	1	6	2.56	1.28
Policy Development	433	1	6	2.34	1.22
Curriculum/Instruction	433	1	6	2.9	1.3
Student Achievement	433	1	6	2.74	1.31
Pupil Personnel Services	433	1	6	3.02	1.13
Staff Personnel Services	433	1	6	1.81	1.1
School Community	433	1	6	2.23	1.15
Parental Involvement	433	1	6	2.11	1.17
Staff Development	433	1	6	2.01	1.27
Budget Management	433	1	6	1.64	1.14
Plant Management	433	1	6	1.54	1.13

Note: Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised, Ferrara, 1994.

A series of independent means *t*-tests were generated in order to compare the SEDS-R results between shared decision making participants and non-shared decision making participants. Additionally, the level of practical significance was measured for all significant different SEDS-R scores using a Cohen-*d* statistic.

The *t*-tests comparisons of shared decision making participants and non-shared decision making participants revealed several that were significant. The SEDS-R area of pupil personnel services showed the largest significant scores for those who participate in shared decision making ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 1.10$) and those who do not participate in shared decision making ($M = 2.53$, $SD = 1.03$); $t(422) = 5.66$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.63$, 95% CI [0.43, 0.89]. Cohen's *d* with a value of $d = 0.60$ reveals a strong practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

The SEDS-R area of curriculum and instruction showed the second largest significant scores for those who participate in shared decision making ($M = 3.10$, $SD = 1.28$) and those who do not participate in shared decision making ($M = 2.36$, $SD = 1.18$);

$t(422) = 5.40$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.60$, 95% CI [0.47, 0.99]. Cohen's d with a value of $d = 0.63$ reveals a strong practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

The SEDS-R area of student achievement showed the third largest significant scores for those who participate in shared decision making ($M = 2.92$, $SD = 1.30$) and those who do not participate in shared decision making ($M = 2.24$, $SD = 1.17$); $t(422) = 4.98$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.55$, 95% CI [0.41, 0.95]. Cohen's d with a value of $d = 0.55$ reveals a strong practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

The SEDS-R area of planning showed the fourth largest significant scores for those who participate in shared decision making ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 1.23$) and those who do not participate in shared decision making ($M = 1.95$, $SD = 1.16$); $t(422) = 6.44$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.71$, 95% CI [0.59, 1.10]. However, it is important to note that a Cohen's d value of $d = 0.71$, which was larger than the abovementioned dimensions, indicates there is a strong practical significance in planning for shared decision making participants versus non-shared decision making participants (Cohen, 1988).

The SEDS-R area of plant management showed the least significant scores for those who participate in shared decision making ($M = 1.61$, $SD = 1.17$) and those who do not participate in shared decision making ($M = 1.33$, $SD = 0.94$); $t(422) = 2.40$, $p = .019$, $d = 0.26$, 95% CI [0.46, 0.52]. Cohen's d with a value of $d = 0.26$ reveals a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

The SEDS-R area of budget management showed the second least significant scores for those who participate in shared decision making ($M = 1.72$, $SD = 1.17$) and those who do not participate in shared decision making ($M = 1.37$, $SD = 1.00$); $t(422) =$

2.81, $p = .004$, $d = 0.32$, 95% CI [0.11, 0.59]. Cohen's d with a value of $d = 0.32$ reveals a moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988). The results of the independent means *t*-tests are presented in Table 43.

Table 43

Summary of Independent Means t-tests Comparing SEDS-R Areas with Participants and Non-Participants in SDM Opportunities

SEDS-R Area	SDM		Non-SDM		*t*(422)	*p*	95% CI		*d*
	M	SD	M	SD			*LL*	*UL*	
Planning	2.80	1.23	1.95	1.16	6.44	<.001*	0.59	1.10	0.71
Policy Develop.	2.49	1.25	1.93	1.02	4.33	<.001*	0.30	0.81	0.49
Curr/Instruct	3.10	1.28	2.36	1.18	5.40	<.001*	0.47	1.00	0.60
Student Achieve	2.92	1.30	2.24	1.17	4.98	<.001*	0.41	0.95	0.55
Pupil Personnel	3.20	1.10	2.53	1.03	5.66	<.001*	0.43	0.89	0.63
Staff Personnel	1.92	1.10	1.47	0.97	3.85	<.001*	0.22	0.67	0.43
School/Comm	2.35	1.14	1.89	1.04	3.77	<.001*	0.22	0.69	0.42
Parental Involv.	2.25	1.18	1.70	1.03	4.47	<.001*	0.31	0.79	0.50
Staff Develop	2.16	1.27	1.57	1.10	4.42	<.001*	0.33	0.85	0.50
Budget Manage	1.72	1.17	1.37	1.00	2.81	0.004*	0.11	0.59	0.32
Plant Manage	1.61	1.17	1.33	0.09	2.40	0.019*	0.46	0.52	0.26

Note. CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL* = upper limit.
*$p < .05$

Pearson correlation coefficient analyses were performed comparing the LPI-O and SEDS-R scores from all participants. These data were used to address the research overarching question "to what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in select Southeast Georgia schools as perceived by teachers?" A second set of Pearson *r* correlation coefficients analyses were performed comparing the results between shared decision making participants to non-decision making participants.

In the first Pearson correlation coefficient analysis including all participants, 52 of the 55 Pearson product-moment coefficients were found to be significant between principal leadership behaviors and the level of shared decision making. These positive, yet weak correlations were significant at the .01 or .05 level of significance and ranged between .099 and .309. Though the majority of the correlations were identified as weak, a Pearson r of .0 to .3 has a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen. 1988). This suggests a minimal relationship between teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership behavior and the level of shared decision making in their schools.

The strongest correlation identified was between the leadership practice model the way and the level of shared decision making in the area of pupil personnel services (r = 0.309). The correlation between the leadership practice model the way and the level of shared decision making in the area of curriculum and instruction was close at r = 0.305.

The weakest correlation identified was between the leadership practice encourage the heart and the level of shared decision making in the area of plant management (r = 0.099). The correlation between the leadership practice challenge the process and the level of shared decision making in the area of plant management was the second weakest at r = 0.104.

In the second Pearson correlation coefficient analysis including those who indicated shared decision making participation, 39 of the 55 Pearson product-moment coefficients were found to be significant between principal leadership behaviors and the level of shared decision making by those who indicated participation in shared decision making opportunities. These positive, yet weak correlations were significant at the .01 or .05 level of significance and ranged between 0.089 and .311. Though the majority of the

correlations were identified as weak, a Pearson r of .0 to .3 has a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen. 1988).

The strongest correlation identified was between the leadership practice model the way and the level of shared decision making in the area of pupil personnel services (r = 0.311). The correlation between the leadership practice enable others to act and the level of shared decision making in the area of pupil personnel services was close behind at r = 0.300.

The weakest correlation identified was between the leadership practice enable others to act and the level of shared decision making in the area of staff development (r = 0.113). The correlation between the leadership practice inspire a shared vision and the level of shared decision making in the area of staff development was the second weakest at r = 0.114.

When comparing the results of the Pearson r product moment correlations of all participants in this study with only those who indicated participation in shared decision making, it is interesting to note were very few real differences. The majority of results indicated little difference between the two groups. In 10 of the 11 dimensions of the SEDS-R, the Pearson r results were lower for those who participated in shared decision making opportunities as compared to all participants in the study. The only exception is in the area of pupil personnel services. In this area, many of the correlations for those who participated in shared decision making opportunities were actually higher than all the participants in the survey. The results are presented in Table 44.

Table 44

Summary of Significant Relationships (r) Between Principal's Leadership Behaviors and SDM for All Survey Participants Versus Only SDM Participants

SEDS-R Area	Model		Inspire		Challenge		Enable		Encourage	
	All	Part	All	Part	All	Part	All	Part	All	Part
Planning	0.275	0.225	0.249	0.205	0.247	0.204	0.242	0.21	0.229	0.181
Policy Dev.	0.225	0.199	0.199	0.181	0.197	0.173	0.177	0.154	0.18	0.143
Curr/Instruct	0.305	0.268	0.286	0.25	0.278	0.233	0.289	0.257	0.262	0.183
Student Ach.	0.281	0.255	0.272	0.251	0.263	0.246	0.266	0.242	0.243	0.193
Pupil Person.	0.309	0.311	0.287	0.284	0.295	0.297	0.289	0.3	0.275	0.254
Staff Person.	0.129	---	0.125	0.184	0.116	---	0.11	---	0.109	---
School/Comm	0.22	0.196	0.204	0.202	0.204	0.178	0.168	0.154	0.18	0.139
Parental Inv.	0.209	0.2	0.204	0.114	0.205	0.196	0.173	0.155	0.182	0.15
Staff Develop	0.16	0.13	0.143	---	0.126	0.123	0.133	0.113	0.142	---
Budget Man.	0.128	---	0.125	---	0.112	---	---	---	---	---
Plant Man.	0.125	---	0.116	---	0.104	---	---	---	---	---

Note. Level of significance set at $p < .05$, $N = 433$, $N = 306$

The specific findings for each of the 11 sub-research questions were similar to the overall findings for the overarching research question. A summary of each subquestion is presented below.

Subquestion 1: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of planning?

The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for all participants was between model the way and planning, $r = .275$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. This was a positive, weak correlation that was significant at the 0.01 level, and had a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988). The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for the shared decision making participants was also between model the way and planning, $r = .225$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$, and had a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 2: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of policy development?

The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for all participants was between model the way and policy development, $r = .225$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. This was a positive, weak correlation that was significant at the 0.01 level, and had a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988). The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for the shared decision making participants was also between model the way and policy development, $r = .199$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$, and had a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 3: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of curriculum/instruction?

The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for all participants was between model the way and curriculum and instruction, $r = .305$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. This was a positive, weak correlation that was significant at the 0.01 level, and had a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988). The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for the shared decision making participants was also between model the way and curriculum and instruction, $r = .268$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$, and had a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 4: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of student achievement?

The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for all participants was between model the way and student achievement, $r = .281$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. This was a positive, weak correlation that was significant at the 0.01 level, and had a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988). The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for the shared decision making participants was also between model the way and student achievement, $r = .255$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$, and had a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 5: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of pupil personnel services?

The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for all participants was between model the way and pupil personnel services, $r = .309$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. This was a positive, weak correlation that was significant at the 0.01 level, and had a moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988). The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for the shared decision making participants was also between model the way and pupil personnel services, $r = .311$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$, and had a moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 6: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of staff personnel services?

The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for all participants was between model the way and staff personnel services, $r = .129$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. This was a positive, weak correlation that was significant at the 0.01 level, and had a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988). No correlations were found for the shared decision making participants between the leadership behaviors and staff personnel services.

Subquestion 7: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of school/community relations?

The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for all participants was between model the way and school and community relations, $r = .220$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. This was a positive, weak correlation that was significant at the 0.01 level, and had a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988). The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for the shared decision making participants was also between model the way and school and community relations, $r = .196$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$, and had a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 8: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of parental involvement?

The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for all participants was between model the way and parental involvement, $r = .209$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. This was a positive, weak correlation that was significant at the 0.01 level, and had a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988). It is interesting to note the strongest Pearson *r* correlation for the shared decision making participants was between inspire a shared vision and parental involvement, $r = .200$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$, and had a weak-moderate practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 9: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of staff development?

The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for all participants was between model the way and staff development, $r = .160$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. This was a positive, weak correlation that was significant at the 0.01 level, and had a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988). The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for the shared decision making participants was also between model the way and staff development, $r = .130$, $p < .01$, $N = 306$, and had a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Subquestion 10: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of budget management?

The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for all participants was between model the way and budget management, $r = .128$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. This was a positive, weak correlation that was significant at the 0.01 level, and had a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988). No correlations were found for the shared decision making participants between the leadership behaviors and budget management.

Subquestion 11: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making as perceived by teachers in the area of plant management?

The strongest Pearson *r* correlation for all participants was between model the way and plant management, $r = .125$, $p < .01$, $N = 433$. This was a positive, weak correlation that was significant at the 0.01 level, and had a weak practical significance (Cohen, 1988). No correlations were found for the shared decision making participants between the leadership behaviors and plant management.

Discussion

This research study was designed to measure the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools as perceived by teachers and determine if a relationship existed between the two. The overarching research question asked "To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools as perceived by teachers?" Each of the 11 subquestions examined to what degree a correlation existed between teacher perceptions of the five leader behaviors and the level of shared decision making in a specific function of school in select Southeast Georgia secondary schools.

Each leadership practice on the LPI-O and the opportunities for participation in the shared decision making dimensions on the SEDS-R encompass relationships between faculty and their school leadership. Therefore, relationships were the lenses through which this study examined teacher perceptions of their principal's five leader behaviors and the level of shared decision making opportunities in their schools (Carson et al., 2007; DePree, 1987; de Vries, 2000; de Vries, Roe, & Taillieu, 2002; Fullan, 2001; Kumar et al., 2014; Leech & Fulton, 2007; Solanksy, 2008; Somech & Wenderow, 2006; Wood, 2005). Through guidance, encouragement, and empowerment principals are building relationships with their faculty and staff. When principals invest in and foster relationships with their faculty and staff, an atmosphere of respect and trust is created. Faculty and staff members are more willing to work towards a common goal when they feel they are respected (Rowland, 2008; Somech, 2005; Tucker & Russell, 2004).

Although only representing a "fair degree of relationship" (Fink, 1995), the strongest correlations, between all five principal leadership behaviors and shared decision making revealed in this study were in the area of pupil personnel services (r = .275 to r = .309). These relationships were consistently reported by teachers who participated in shared decision making opportunities and those who did not participate. The higher correlations in the area of pupil personnel services may be explained by the fact that those services are provided to help support the students in their learning (Ferrara & Repa, 1993). These services can include, but are not limited to, opportunities for remediation through special education, enrichment opportunities through gifted/talented programs or accelerated courses, guidance, counselors, health services, and student awards/recognition. The five leadership behaviors as identified by Kouzes and Posner (2012) may possibly influence teachers more when collaborating to meet the needs of all students.

Although the results of the present study revealed weak relationships between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools as perceived by teachers, it is still important to pursue the concept of leadership that promotes shared decision making. It has been documented in literature that shared leadership which encourages shared decision making is improving organizations and making them more effective by allowing them to learn and work together (Rosenholtz, 1989). According to Bass (1990), as cited by Stagnaro and Piotrowski (2014), leadership with shared decision making is "a power function that structures and restructures situations to manage team expectations" and "actively manages social influence wherein one team member affects the motivation of

others" (p. 4). Spillane (2006), as discussed by Stagnaro and Piotrowski (2014), said "leadership should be a direct function of the organization's health…and designed to influence the organizational members' motivation, knowledge, inspiration, or methods and practices" (p. 4). Pearce and Conger (2003) described shared leadership as a "dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals or both" (p.1).

Shared decision making has played a large role in school and curriculum reform, as well in the transformation of teacher and principal roles (Leech & Fulton, 2007; Weiss, 1992). McLaughlin and Talbert (1993) and Brandt (1995) concurred with Rosenholtz's (1989) research findings suggesting that when teachers are given opportunities for collaboration and shared decision making, they tend to share common visions and embrace decisions that "are harnessed into group efforts that push for high-quality learning for all students" (Coleman, 2005).

The weak relationships between the principal's leadership behavior and the level of shared decision making measured in the current study are supported in research. Various studies have indicated mixed results regarding the effectiveness of shared leadership and shared decision making. Though some studies have reported positive relationships between shared leadership and teachers' empowerment, morale, and willingness to participate in collaborative initiatives (Leithwood, Mascall, & Strauss 2009; McCloskey, 1967; Somech, 2005), other research studies that have indicated negative consequences if shared decision making is not properly employed (Conway &

Calzi, 1995). This can lead to teachers feeling uneasy and concerned when asked to participate in shared decision making situations (Smylie, 1992).

Results of this study indicated teachers have a positive view of their school principal's leadership practices. Most of the responses chosen on the LPI-O demonstrated that the principals exhibited these exemplary leadership practices "fairly often" or "almost always" (range of means from 8.28 to 8.39). Though these data indicate teachers view their principal's leadership behaviors favorably, there is always room for improvement in all areas, especially modeling the way and challenging the process.

Over the last twenty years, school administrators have been encouraged to "re-culture" those in the teaching profession through shared decision making opportunities, allowing for "collegial interaction" and "professional growth initiatives" (Coleman, 2005; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Hord, 1996; Rottier, 1996). These shared decision making opportunities have allowed principals to lead through Kouzes and Posner's Exemplary Leader Behaviors (2002) of model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. However, the possibility for shared decision making opportunities is dependent upon the willingness of the principal to share his/her authority and/or provide the faculty opportunities for participation in decision making. The principal's desire and/or ability to teach and lead teachers to accept and take on new responsibilities also play a major role in the success of a school (Coleman, 2005; Hord, 1996).

The current study revealed low levels of participation in the dimensions measured by the SEDS-R, although 71 percent of the teachers surveyed actually reported participating in shared decision making opportunities. One potential influencing factor was once again the lack of leader training in the area of shared decision making. Principals may support the theory of shared decision making but lack the understanding and know-how to properly implement it (DeMatthews, 2014). Leech (1999) suggests that training topics for leaders may include "team building, group processes, leading effective work groups, and meeting facilitation" (p.141). Some principals struggle to involve teachers in collaboration and shared decision making as they have a hard time letting go and allowing others to help in the decision making process (Williamson & Blackburn 2018). Other principals use it to their advantage to manipulate the process and push their own agenda (Spaulding, 1994). Regardless, shared decision making is a complex process that takes time, training, and patience to implement.

Another factor that may have influenced the low shared decision making participation among teachers in this study is the effect shared decision making has on teachers. Many teachers may lack the understanding as to what exactly their role in the shared decision process is (Turnbull, 2005). Some teachers feel it places them in awkward or uncomfortable positions (Smylie, 1992). Some teachers are willing to participate in shared decision making when it involves school-wide issues, but are not willing to participate when it involves classrooms practices or instructional strategies (Griffin, 1995). Other studies have revealed teachers who served on shared decision making committees failed to participate appropriately at times by acting on their self-

perceived power and making decisions in pursuit of their own interests or agendas (Erbes, 2006; Gehring, 2004).

Although in the current study principals were perceived to display very positive leadership practices such as enabling others to act and encourage the heart, it may be that they need to have more conversations about the benefits of shared decision making. Further, principals may also need to "model" these decision making processes. Shared decision making is more than just a onetime discussion of how things should be decided and implemented. Lashway (1997), referencing Liontos (1994) and Blase, Blase, Anderson, and Dungan (1995) states, "the primary purpose of SDM is to improve teaching and learning…increase job satisfaction…create new forms of leadership" (p.1). It is a process involving administration, teachers, staff, and others in the school community all working together to implement quality decisions regarding effective education. All parties involved can benefit from decision making opportunities when collaborating and learning from each other's expertise. Principals today are encouraged to engage in shared decision making and shared leadership (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). Principals need to be mindful that uncomfortable situations can arise if shared decision making is not properly implemented. Though shared decision making is a democratic process, the principal is the leader of the school and is responsible for ensuring the school maintains its course (DeMatthews, 2014).

The findings of the current study of small, mostly rural districts in Southeast Georgia were compared to similar studies of a larger urban school district in North Florida using both the LPI-O and the SEDS-R. The findings of these studies demonstrate both similarities and differences. Therefore, this may imply principal leadership

practices and the shared decision making climates in small, more rural districts and large, urban districts, may be similar but have unique differences. Of course these findings are hard to generalize since the number of studies are very small and limited to very few school systems.

In a study conducted by Leech, Smith, Green, & Fulton (2003), 242 teachers from 12 middle schools and 404 teachers from 14 high schools from a large urban school district were administered the LPI-O survey. Results from their study revealed the most exhibited leadership practice of secondary school principals was enabling others to act and modeling the way. Similarly, results from the present study revealed teachers from secondary schools in this small rural RESA district felt their principals also often exhibited the leadership practices of enabling others to act. However, ironically, the least exhibited practice in the present study was modeling the way. Leaders in both studies tended to encourage teachers to take initiative.

In the area of shared decision making, in a study conducted by Leech, Wilburn, Fulton, and Jones (2003), 646 secondary school teachers from 26 schools in a large urban school district were administered the SEDS-R. Results from their study revealed high teacher participation in shared decision making opportunities regarding curriculum and instruction and pupil personnel services. The study also revealed very little, if any, teacher participation in shared decision making opportunities in budget management. These findings mirror those in the current study in which teachers from smaller more rural schools revealed high teacher participation in shared decision making opportunities regarding pupil personnel services and curriculum and instruction and low participation in budget management and plant management. This may indicate that regardless of the

type of school district, teachers and principals are more interested in collaborating about issues that most impact student learning and are less interested in sharing in more operational decisions.

It is possible the weak relationships discovered in the Pearson correlations of this study may relate to the survey used to identify leader behaviors. Kouzes and Posner's (1997) LPI-O definitions may not have provided enough information to ensure understanding to influence the perceptions of teachers regarding shared decision making opportunities in their schools. It is possible that there are other leadership surveys that would better measure leader behavior when correlating with the SEDS-R area of decision making. There are many different leadership assessments that could be correlated with the SEDS-R: Leader Behavior Analysis and the Leader Behavior Analysis II (Blanchard, Hambleton, Zigarmi, & Forsyth, 1982, 1985), Leader Behavior Descriptive Questionnaire (Stogdill, 1963), and Principal Leader Assessment (Goldring, Huff, May, & Camburn, 2008), are just a few for consideration. The leadership behaviors described in these instruments may be better aligned with behaviors, practices, or dispositions that promote teacher participation in the decision making process. This finding was corroborated by Leech and Fulton (2007) in a similar study of secondary teachers in a large, urban school system using both the LPI-O and SEDS-R.

Limitations

There are several limitations of this study the researcher finds important to address. First, external validity and internal validity must be addressed for this study. Harris (1998) differentiates between external and internal by describing external validity as "the confidence you can have that the same results would be found under other

circumstances and particularly with other participants" while internal validity is "the confidence you can have in the casual relationships implied by the data" (p. 63). Instruments used in this study consistently reported high internal reliabilities. The external validity may have been impacted by the COVD-19 crisis that faced the teachers participating in the study. Participants may have been under much external stress and therefore the results not have been similar if administered during other periods in time.

A second limitation was that quantitative studies rely on a large sample size. Due to the low number of participants and only having a 35% response rate, these responses may not be representative of the observations, perceptions, and experiences of the majority of secondary school teachers in the Coastal Plains RESA District. The timing of this study may have played a large role in the small response rate and sample size. Two weeks after paper surveys were distributed to each school in the RESA district, educators were faced with mandated school closures which lasted several months until the school year came to a close. Electronic surveys were distributed via Qualtrics two weeks after the mandated school closures, as many teachers were trying to manage planning and virtual learning for the first time. Educators were faced with unprecedented circumstances which they had never faced before and participation in a research study may not have been top priority. The research was also dependent upon each principal to distribute the hard copy survey or the survey link to his/her faculty. Though numerous contact attempts were made by the researcher via email, phone calls, and in person, there was still no guarantee that the principals distributed the surveys or survey link in a timely manner, if at all. The data were strictly representative of those who chose to participate. Therefore, the results may have limited generalizability.

A third limitation was this study only included one RESA district in Georgia. There are 16 RESA districts in throughout the State of Georgia. This study may not be indicative of what study results from other RESAs would render. South Georgia culture could bias the responses of participants. Southern culture, practices, perceptions, opinions, and experiences could all influence the responses provided. Cultures and traditions in other parts of Georgia or other states could render different responses and findings. Cultural bias is something to consider when embarking on research dealing with perceptions of leader behavior.

A fourth limitation was the participant's knowledge, understanding, interpretation, and comprehension of the statements provided in the LPI-O and SEDS-R survey instruments. Experience or lack of experience in the classroom may be correlated to the responses provided for leader behaviors and/or shared decision making dimensions. Demographic information reported that 34.7% of survey participants had less than 10 years' experience as a teacher while 70.2% had been at their current school for less than 10 years. 28.9% of respondents held a bachelor's degree and nearly 30% had not participated in shared decision making opportunities. Limited experiences and interactions may have impeded one's comprehension of questions regarding perception of leader behavior and understand of the shared decision making dimensions.

A fifth limitation was the study focused on the five practices of exemplary leadership as identified in the LPI-O and the eleven dimensions of the SEDS-R surveys. The study did not include any considerations of leadership behaviors or possibilities of shared decision making outside those measured on this survey.

Finally, the study was strictly quantitative and did not allow for any qualitative components. However, a qualitative section could have provided a deeper understanding of the teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behaviors and the level of shared decision making in their respective schools.

Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of this section is for the researcher to recommend additional research possibilities based upon this quantitative research study. This correlational study is a starting point for further research regarding teacher perceptions of leader behavior and shared decision making in other areas in the State of Georgia. There are other instruments available that could provide quantitative measures for teacher perceptions, leader behavior and shared decision making.

The first recommendation is for a similar study to be conducted in the same RESA district now that the traditional way of education has changed due to the COVID-19 crisis. The majority of participants in this study willingly answered both surveys during the mandated school closure. It was during this time teachers were learning to manage students, plan and prepare lessons, and teach all in the virtual realm. It would be interesting to see how the results of that study compared to the results of this study. Have teachers' perception of their leader's behavior changed due to the COVID crisis and the transition from traditional teaching to virtual teaching? Have teachers had more opportunities for shared decision making participation now that many are teaching virtually?

The second recommendation is for similar studies to be conducted in all RESA districts throughout the State of Georgia. Georgia is such a diverse state. There are rural farm land areas, urban industrial areas, metropolitan areas, and the north Georgia mountains. Will there be a difference in teacher perceptions of leader behavior between rural and urban districts or between coastal plains regions and north Georgia mountain regions? Will there be a difference in shared decision making opportunities when comparing RESAs in different geographic regions of Georgia? Does the organizational structure of schools vary from district to district? Do attitudes and beliefs regarding shared decision making vary from district to district?

The third recommendation is for a similar study to be conducted in the elementary schools within the Coastal Plains RESA District. Is there a difference in teacher perceptions of leader behavior at the elementary school level? Are there more opportunities for decision making in the lower grades? Is the culture for shared decision making in elementary schools different from that of middle and high schools?

The forth recommendation is for similar studies to be conducted but include a qualitative component to the study. This would allow the participants to have a voice in their responses. Did those who participated in shared decision making opportunities view their principal's leadership behaviors differently than those who were not allowed shared decision making opportunities? Is there a difference in teacher perceptions of leader behavior among teachers who have less experience than teachers who have more experience? What do the participants say regarding their principal's leadership behaviors? Do the participants have suggestions to help their principals achieve those

exemplary leadership practices? What are the teachers' attitudes and beliefs about shared decision making?

Results from further research may be useful to principals who are considering shared decision making opportunities for their faculty. Information may also be pertinent in understanding teachers' perceptions of the leader behaviors of their principals.

Conclusion

Limited research has been conducted examining the relationship between perceived leader behavior and shared decision making opportunities in selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools. The findings of this correlational study may provide a baseline for future studies to be conducted regarding teacher perceptions of leader behavior and shared decision making. The specific leadership practices of the LPI-O explained little of the variance in the specific dimensions of shared decision making of the SEDS-R that leads the researcher to believe other factors might influence opportunities for shared decision making in secondary schools.

It is significant to note teachers, identified through their school location, grade level and years of experience, made similar observations regarding their principal's leader behaviors and their limited participation in shared decision making opportunities.

A practical implication is the limited utilization of shared decision making opportunities afforded to teachers. It may be important for principals to relinquish some of their authority and allow teachers to take part in various aspects of decision making in their schools. Administrators and teachers alike, represented by data from this study, may observe the traditional role of principals being the sole decision maker in the school. Information gathered in this study may aid principals in becoming more cognizant of how

their faculty perceives their leader behaviors. They may also become more cognizant of the desire some teachers have to participate in shared decision making opportunities. This could possibly encourage leaders to nurture their participation.

The traditional view of school leadership is not the mindset in today's educational institutions. Principals are no longer the sole decision makers in what takes place in the schools; it requires a team effort among all involved. Rost (1991), as cited by Leech, Smith, Green, and Fulton (2003), defines leadership as "an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect mutual purposes" (p. 3). Collaborative efforts and shared governance are imperative among administration, teachers, and staff to build trust among each to meet the ever-changing needs, demands, and expectations facing our educational system.

Effective and successful principals are those who are aware of the challenges involving shared leadership, yet seek opportunities for their faculty and staff to participate in the shared decision making process to improve student learning and achievement and work towards closing the achievement gap. "Unity is strength . . . when there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved." - Mattie Stepanek (*Journey Through Heartsongs,* 2002).

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APPENDIX A:

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Protocol Exemption Report

Institutional Review Board (IRB)
For the Protection of Human Research Participants

PROTOCOL EXEMPTION REPORT

Protocol Number: 03983-2020 **Responsible Researcher:** Lacey Wynn

Supervising Faculty: Dr. Donald Leech

Project Title: *Teacher Perception of Principal Leader Behavior and Shared Decision Making in Select Georgia Secondary Schools.*

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD DETERMINATION:

This research protocol is **Exempt** from Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight under Exemption **Category 2**. Your research study may begin immediately. If the nature of the research project changes such that exemption criteria may no longer apply, please consult with the IRB Administrator (irb@valdosta.edu) before continuing your research.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

- *This study has been approved to begin at the following school districts - **Berrien, Brooks, Colquitt, Cook, Echols, Irwin (03.30.2020), Lanier, Lowndes & Tift Counties, & Valdosta City Schools.***
- *Upon completion of this research study all data (email correspondence, survey data, participant lists, pseudonym lists, etc.) must be securely maintained (locked file cabinet, password protected computer, etc.) and accessible only by the researcher for a minimum of 3 years.*

☒ ***If this box is checked, please submit any documents you revise to the IRB Administrator at irb@valdosta.edu to ensure an updated record of your exemption.***

Elizabeth Ann Olphie *02.25.2020*
Elizabeth Ann Olphie, IRB Administrator

Thank you for submitting an IRB application.
Please direct questions to irb@valdosta.edu or 229-253-2947.

Revised: 06.02.16

APPENDIX B:

Letter to Kouzes and Posner

JOSSEY-BASS
An Imprint of WILEY
989 Market Street, Fifth Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103-1741

Monday, October 7, 2019

Dear Drs. Kouzes and Posner,

I am requesting permission to reproduce the Leadership Practices Inventory -Observer for academic research. I am currently working on my dissertation at Valdosta State University in Valdosta, Georgia. Attached is a letter of acknowledgment from Dr. Donald Leech, my committee chairperson.

My research agenda includes exploring the leadership behaviors of secondary education principals who facilitate shared decision making and teacher empowerment. The specific overarching research question to be investigated in this study will be:
To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors
of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making
in selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools as perceived by teachers?

The study will include the use of the LPI-O and the Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised (an instrument measuring the organizational decision making culture). The study will include approximately 50 principals and 2,400 teachers from the Coastal Plains and Okefenokee RESA districts in Southeast Georgia. I will begin on data collection from these potential participants within the first few weeks of January 2020.

The leadership practices defined by you provide a strong construct by which to describe exemplary leader behaviors. Coupled with the SEDS-R, I feel this is the most appropriate way to implement this study.

To ease the task of data collection, I am requesting permission to reproduce the LPI-O, including the proper copyright imprints, on an electronic survey where results will be sent to me. What process should I follow to gain proper authorization and what fees do I need to pay? I would be honored to provide you a hard and soft copy of all data collected during my research and as well as the research findings. I believe sharing research and its findings to be a beneficial tool for furthering the knowledge and understanding of leadership.

I am also requesting any updated validity and reliability studies on the LPI-O. Your consideration and response to, and assistance with these concerns are greatly appreciated. Please feel free to contact me regarding questions, concerns, or additional information. I would be an honor to have this study add to the current exemplary leadership practices research.

Most Sincerely,

Lacey L. Wynn

APPENDIX C:

Permission Letter from Wiley

WILEY

October 15, 2019

Lacey Wynn
Valdosta State University
1500 North Patterson Street
Valdosta, Georgia 31698

Dear Lacey Wynn:

Thank you for your request to use the LPI®: Leadership Practices Inventory® in your research. This letter grants you permission to use either the print or electronic LPI [Self/Observer/Self and Observer] instrument[s] in your research. You may ***reproduce*** the instrument in printed form at no charge beyond the discounted one-time cost of purchasing a single copy; however, you may not distribute any photocopies except for specific research purposes. If you prefer to use the electronic distribution of the LPI you will need to separately contact Joshua Carter (jocarter@wiley.com) directly for further details regarding product access and payment. Please be sure to review the product information resources before reaching out with pricing questions.

Permission to use either the written or electronic versions is contingent upon the following:

(1) The LPI may be used only for research purposes and may not be sold or used in conjunction with any compensated activities;
(2) Copyright in the LPI, and all derivative works based on the LPI, is retained by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner. The following copyright statement must be included on all reproduced copies of the instrument(s); "Copyright © 2013 James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner. Published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. All rights reserved. Used with permission";
(3) One (1) **electronic** copy of your dissertation and one (1) copy of all papers, reports, articles, and the like which make use of the LPI data must be sent **promptly** to my attention at the address below; and,
(4) We have the right to include the results of your research in publication, promotion, distribution and sale of the LPI and all related products.

Permission is limited to the rights granted in this letter and does not include the right to grant others permission to reproduce the instrument(s) except for versions made by nonprofit organizations for visually or physically handicapped persons. No additions or changes may be made without our prior written consent. You understand that your use of the LPI shall in no way place the LPI in the public domain or in any way compromise our copyright in the LPI. This license is nontransferable. We reserve the right to revoke this permission at any time, effective upon written notice to you, in the event we conclude, in our reasonable judgment, that your use of the LPI is compromising our proprietary rights in the LPI.

Best wishes for every success with your research project.
Cordially,

Mélanie Mortensen
Rights Coordinator
mmortensen@wiley.com

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APPENDIX D:

Letter to Repa

J. Theodore Repa, Ph.D.
Repa & Associates
Post Office Box 67
West Boothbay Harbor, ME 04575

Tuesday, October 15, 2019

Dear Drs. Repa and Ferrara,

Per my conversation with Dr. Repa earlier today, I am writing to request permission to reproduce the Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised for academic research. I am currently working on my dissertation at Valdosta State University in Valdosta, Georgia.

My research agenda includes exploring the leadership behaviors of secondary education principals who facilitate shared decision making and teacher empowerment. The specific overarching research question to be investigated in this study will be: To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools as perceived by teachers?

The study will include the use of the SEDS-R and the Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer. The study will include approximately 50 principals and 2,400 teachers from the Coastal Plains and Okefenokee RESA districts in Southeast Georgia. I will begin data collection from these potential participants within the first few weeks of January 2020.

To ease the task of data collection, I am requesting permission to reproduce the SEDS-R, including the proper copyright imprints, on an electronic survey where results will be sent to me. What process should I follow to gain proper authorization and what fees do I need to pay? I would be honored to provide you a hard and soft copy of all data collected during my research and as well as the research findings. I believe sharing research and its findings to be a beneficial tool for furthering the knowledge and understanding of leadership.

I am also requesting any updated validity and reliability studies on the SEDS-R. Your consideration and response to, and assistance with these concerns are greatly appreciated. Please feel free to contact me regarding questions, concerns, or additional information. I would be an honor to have this study add to the current Shared Education decision research.

Most sincerely,

Lacey L. Wynn
llwynn@valdosta.edu
229-563-1448

APPENDIX E:

Letter to Ferrara

Donna Ferrara, Ph.D.
Shared Education Decisions Associates
3 Linda Lane
Hampton Bays, NY 11946

Tuesday, October 15, 2019

Dear Dr. Ferrara,

Per my conversation with Dr. Repa on October 15, I am writing to request permission to reproduce the Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised for academic research. I am currently working on my dissertation at Valdosta State University in Valdosta, Georgia.

My research agenda includes exploring the leadership behaviors of secondary education principals who facilitate shared decision making and teacher empowerment. The specific overarching research question to be investigated in this study will be:
To what degree is there a relationship between the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals and the level of shared decision making in selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools as perceived by teachers?

The study will include the use of the SEDS-R and the Leadership Practices Inventory -Observer. The study will include approximately 50 principals and 2,400 teachers from the Coastal Plains and Okefenokee RESA districts in Southeast Georgia. I will begin data collection from these potential participants within the first few weeks of January 2020.

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I am also requesting any updated validity and reliability studies on the SEDS-R. Your consideration and response to, and assistance with these concerns are greatly appreciated. Please feel free to contact me regarding questions, concerns, or additional information. I would be an honor to have this study add to the current Shared Education decision research.

Most sincerely,

Lacey L. Wynn
llwynn@valdosta.edu
229-563-1448

APPENDIX F:

Permission from Ferrara

3 Linda Lane
Hampton Bays, New York 11946
October 25, 2019

To the Chair and the Committee of Lacey L. Wynn:

As the developer of the Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised (SEDS-R), I give permission to Ms. Wynn to utilize my instrumentation for her doctoral degree study at Valdosta State University in Valdosta, Georgia, USA. This permission, with its restrictions below, apply to the above-mentioned instrument, which she specifically requested access to and use of, and to any and all of the other instruments I have developed and may share with her in future communications.

I have indicated to Ms. Wynn that we will have to discuss any changes she might make to the instrument as changes can compromise the psychometric properties of the instrument and therefore impact the data results of the research.

The permission to utilize my instrumentation is limited to the following: Ms. Wynn may utilize the instrumentation only for her doctoral dissertation and only under the conditions stated in this letter.

I do not charge any fees for the use of my instrumentation by students pursuing Bachelors, Masters, or Doctoral degrees. Any use beyond the pursuit of academic degrees is subject to a fee structure, which I discuss with any clients prior to use in any school, district, county, state, national, or international investigations not related to higher or terminal education degrees. These instruments are all copyrighted materials and are subject to the normal protections of copyrighted materials.

I require that this letter of permission appear in an appendix in her dissertation. Additionally, in return for the use of the instrumentation in pursuing a degree, I request a hard copy or an electronic copy of the dissertation once the dissertation has been completed.

I am gratified that over 27 years after the completion of my own work (New York University, 1992) that I am still receiving requests for the use of my instrumentation. Over 30 studies have been completed nationally and internationally using such instrumentation.

I also offer my services to assist Ms. Wynn in any way that I can as she proceeds through the work of her dissertation. She may pose questions, ask advice, and/or send me chapters/sections for review as she writes, and I will gladly give her feedback.

I wish Ms. Wynn all good luck in the completion of her study and look forward to seeing the final product of her efforts.

If you wish to communicate with me, you may contact me at ferrara@optonline.net, 631-903-5935, or via Skype (drdonnaferrara).

With all good wishes,

Donna L. Ferrara, Ph.D.

APPENDIX G:

Superintendent's Information Letter

Dear Dr./Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____:

My name is Lacey Wynn, and I am a doctoral candidate in Educational Leadership at Valdosta State University through the Department of Curriculum, Leadership, and Technology. I am under the supervision of dissertation chair Dr. Don Leech. I am contacting you to request permission to survey middle school and high teachers in your district. The research to be conducted is strictly quantitative and is focused on principal leadership behavior and shared decision making. This study involves teacher's perception of principal leadership behaviors and the level of shared decision making practiced in the Coastal Plains RESA District.

With your permission, middle school and high school teachers in your system will be asked to complete a survey within the next few weeks. Data will be obtained through the Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (LPI-O) and the Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised (SEDS-R). Both instruments will be distributed in hard copy form. I will provide an envelope of surveys to each principal for their faculty. All surveys, once completed, should be returned to the envelope and I will come collect the envelope. I would like to have surveys ready for pickup by Wednesday, April 1, 2020.

Participants will be given a letter of explanation regarding the purpose of this study as well as a consent form. They will be required to respond "yes" on the informed consent form. Through this step, I will be guaranteed informed consent of all participants. To ensure all participant responses remain anonymous, I will provide a thorough explanation that no identifying information should be provided on the survey or on the demographic questionnaire. Through the use of hard copy surveys, all responses will remain anonymous. I will be the only person to know from which school the surveys were taken. I will personally come collect the survey envelope when completed. All returned surveys will be kept in a locked safe at my home and I will be the only one with access to locked safe. Surveys will remain in the locked safe until enough time has passed for them to be destroyed. All data will be monitored through Qualtrics, a survey tool through Valdosta State University to collect and monitor data. This information will be stored on an encrypted drive which I alone will have access to. All information will be destroyed once study has been completed.

No published results of this study will identify you or your school. No names will be linked to any of the findings. If for any reason this study is presented, no identities of teachers, principals, or superintendents will be shared. I will be more than happy to provide you a copy of the findings and results of this study at no cost. As a thank you, I will make a monetary contribution to the Principal's Fund of the middle school and high school whose faculty returns the highest percentage of completed surveys.

This study an exciting opportunity to add to the literature and research regarding teacher's perception of principal leadership behaviors and the level of shared decision making in middle and high school. It is also an opportunity for South Georgia to be represented in research of this type. At the present time, there is not an educational study in the area of leadership and shared decision making in the State of Georgia. This study will not only put Georgia on the map in educational research, it will highlight the Coastal Plains RESA District. I chose our RESA district because I have been a teacher in Berrien County for the last 10 years.

If you consent to allowing the aforementioned school personnel to participate in this research, please sign and date the attached consent form. Please scan the signed form and send to my email address at llwynn@valdosta.edu. Once I receive your form, I will send you a self-addressed, stamped envelope for you to return the original form.

Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions or concerns, or if you need additional information, please feel free to contact me at llwynn@valdosta.edu or 229-563-1448.

Sincerely,

Lacey L. Wynn

Lacey L. Wynn, Ed.S.
Doctoral Candidate
Valdosta State University

APPENDIX H:

Superintendent's Statement of Consent to Participate in Study

As superintendent of _____ District, I give VSU doctoral candidate Lacey Wynn permission to conduct educational research at the following school(s):

_____.

The research will be conducted on teacher's perception of principal leadership behaviors and the level of shared decision making practiced in selected Southeast Georgia secondary schools. Permission is granted to administer the survey. I understand participation in this survey is strictly voluntary. I understand each participant must respond "yes" to the informed consent descriptor prior to gaining access to the survey. I understand all identifying personal information will not be recorded at any time. I understand all surveys will be managed by Mrs. Wynn and kept confidential until the time comes for this information to be destroyed. I also understand all data will be monitored through Qualtrics, a survey tool through Valdosta State University to collect and monitor data. This information will be stored on an encrypted drive which only the researcher will have access to. All information will be destroyed once study has been complete. I further understand no individuals or schools will be identified in any of the reports.

_____ _____

Superintendent's signature Date

APPENDIX I:

Principal's Information Letter

Dear Dr./Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____:

My name is Lacey Wynn, and I am a doctoral candidate in Educational Leadership at Valdosta State University under the supervision of dissertation chair Dr. Don Leech, through the Department of Curriculum, Leadership, and Technology. I am inviting your faculty to take part in my study of principal leadership and shared decision making. This study is strictly quantitative and involves teacher's perception of principal leadership behaviors and the level of shared decision making practiced in selected Georgia secondary schools. The Kouzes and Posner Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (LPI-O) and Ferarra's Shared Education Decision Survey-Revised (SEDS-R) will be the survey instruments. As a part of the survey, teachers will be asked to respond to some demographic questions that will aid in research.

The survey will be in two sections. The first section consists of questions that cover The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The second section consists of questions that cover Shared Education Decisions: Planning, Policy Development, Curriculum and Instruction, Student Achievement, Pupil Personnel, Staff Personnel, Community/School Relations, Parental Involvement, Staff Development, Budget Management, and Plant Management.

With your permission, your teachers will be asked to complete the survey within the next few weeks. Data will be obtained through the Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer (LPI-O) and the Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised (SEDS-R). Both instruments will be distributed in hard copy form. I will provide an envelope of surveys for your faculty. If possible, please allow your faculty to complete the surveys during a faculty meeting or a grade group meeting. All surveys should be returned to the envelope and I will come collect the envelope.

Participants will be given a letter of explanation regarding purpose of this study as well as a consent form. They will be required to respond "yes" on the informed consent form. Through this step, I will be guaranteed informed consent of all participants. To ensure all participant responses remain anonymous, I will provide a thorough explanation that no identifying information should be provided on the survey or on the demographic questionnaire. Through the use of hard copy surveys, all responses are anonymous. I will be the only person to know from which school the surveys were taken. I will personally come collect the survey envelope when completed. All returned surveys will be kept in a locked safe at my home and I will be the only one with access to locked safe. All data will be monitored through Qualtrics, a survey tool through Valdosta State University to collect and monitor data. This information will be stored on an encrypted drive which I

alone will have access to. All information will be destroyed once study has been complete.

No published results of this study will identify you or your school. No names will be linked to any of the findings. If for any reason this study is presented, no identities of teachers or principals will be shared.

The data collected from your teachers will be totally anonymous, only used to enable aggregation of data from each of your schools, and will not be used for any other purpose. All aggregate data will be available only on the researcher and the dissertation committee.

By signing the enclosed form, you are attesting to the following:

- You understand all information presented above
- You have been presented with the opportunity to ask any questions regarding the survey or data that will be collected
- You feel you understand the risks and potential benefits involved in this study.

Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions or concerns, or if you need additional information, please feel free to contact me at _____.

Sincerely,

Lacey L. Wynn
Doctoral Candidate
Valdosta State University

APPENDIX J:

Principal's Statement of Consent to Participate in Study

As principal of _____, I give Lacey Wynn permission to conduct educational research in the following school: _____. I have read fully and understand the information presented regarding the research study on Principal Leadership Behavior and Shared Decision Making. I give my voluntary consent allowing the aforementioned school personnel to participate in this research. I understand participation in this survey is voluntary and all responses will be kept confidential. No individuals or school will be identified in any of the reports. All returned surveys will be kept in a locked safe at researcher's home and she will be the only one with access to locked safe. Surveys will remain in locked safe until enough time has passed for them to be destroyed. All data will be monitored through Qualtrics, a survey tool through Valdosta State University to collect and monitor data. This information will be stored on an encrypted drive which only the researcher will have access to. All information will be destroyed once study has been complete.

_____ _____

Principal's signature Date

APPENDIX K:

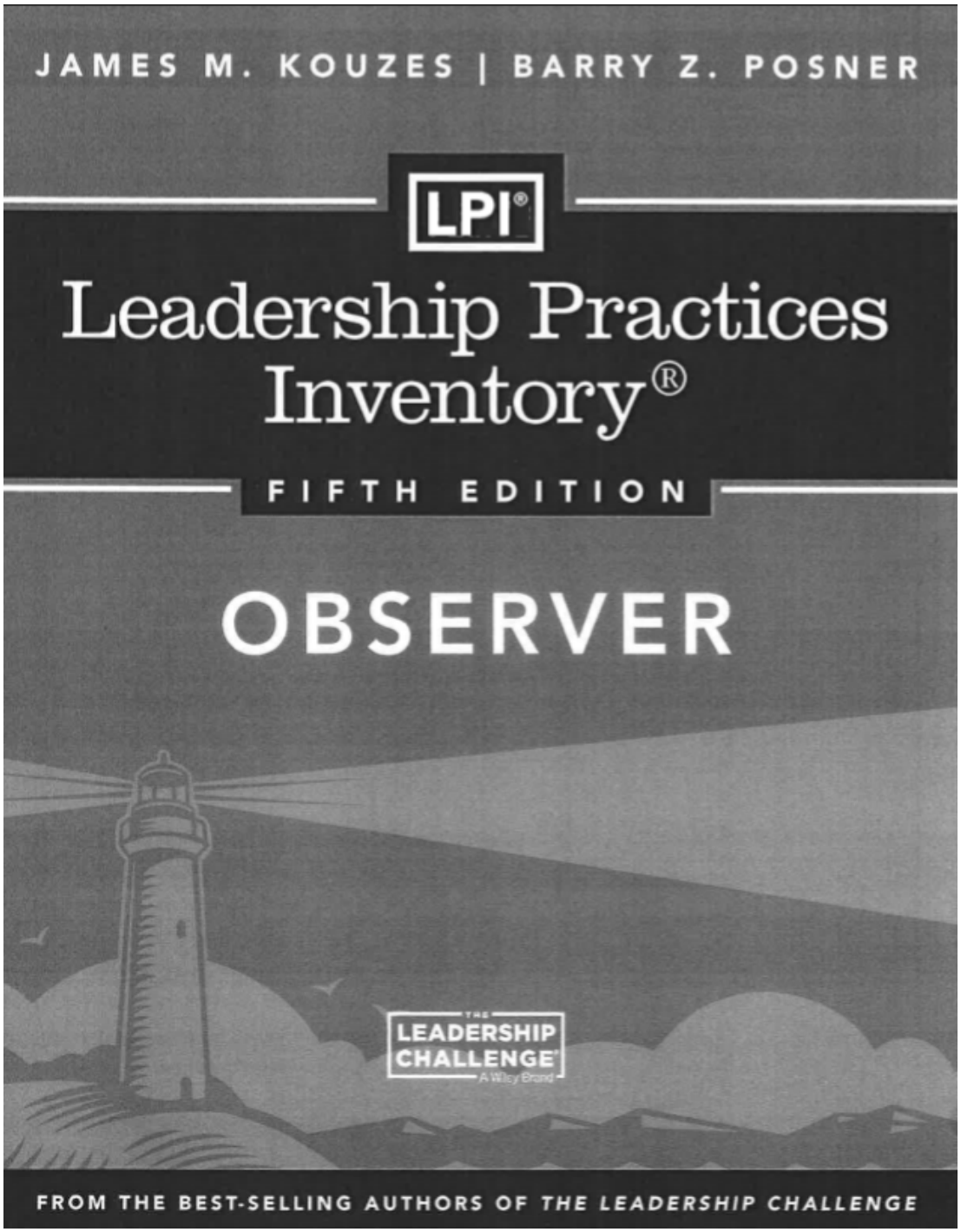
IRB Research Statement for Survey

You are being asked to participate in a survey research project entitled ***"Teacher perceptions of Principal Leader Behavior and Shared Decision Making in Select Georgia Secondary Schools,"*** which is being conducted by ***Lacey L. Wynn***, a ***student at Valdosta State University***. The purpose of the study is to ***determine if there is a relationship between how teachers perceive the leadership behavior of their principal and the level of shared decision making opportunities provided***. You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, your responses may help us learn more about ***how to prepare future school leaders in promoting and implementing teacher participation in shared decision making opportunities***. There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this study other than those encountered in day-to-day life. Participation should take approximately ***25-30 minutes*** to complete. This survey is anonymous. No one, including the researcher, will be able to associate your responses with your identity. Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to take the survey, to stop responding at any time, or to skip any questions that you do not want to answer. Participants must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this study. Your completion of the survey serves as your voluntary agreement to participate in this research project and your certification that you are 18 or older. You may print a copy of this statement for your records.

Questions regarding the purpose or procedures of the research should be directed to ***Lacey L. Wynn at llwynn@valdosta.edu***. This study has been exempted from Institutional Review Board (IRB) review in accordance with Federal regulations. The IRB, a university committee established by Federal law, is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB Administrator at 229-253-2947 or irb@valdosta.edu.

APPENDIX L:

Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer Survey


JAMES M. KOUZES | BARRY Z. POSNER
LPI®
Leadership Practices Inventory®
FIFTH EDITION
OBSERVER
THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE
A Wiley Brand
FROM THE BEST-SELLING AUTHORS OF THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE® A Wiley Brand

BY JAMES M. KOUZES & BARRY Z. POSNER

INSTRUCTIONS:

You are being asked by the person whose name appears at the top of the next page to assess his or her leadership behaviors. Below the person's name you will find thirty statements describing various leadership behaviors. Please read each statement carefully, and using the rating scale on the right, ask yourself:

"How frequently does this person engage in the behavior described?"

When selecting your response to each statement:

- Be realistic about the extent to which this person actually engages in the behavior.
- Be as honest and accurate as you can be.
- DO NOT answer in terms of how you would like to see this person behave or in terms of how you think he or she should behave.
- DO answer in terms of how this person typically behaves on most days, on most projects, and with most people.
- Be thoughtful about your responses. For example, giving this person 10s on all items is most likely not an accurate description of his or her behavior. Similarly, giving someone all 1s or all 5s is most likely not an accurate description either. Most people will do some things more or less often than they do other things.
- If you feel that a statement does not apply, it's probably because you don't see or experience the behavior. That means this person does not frequently engage in the behavior, at least not around you. In that case, assign a rating of 3 or lower.

For each statement, decide on a response and then record the corresponding number in the box to the right of the statement. After you have responded to all thirty statements, go back through the LPI one more time to make sure you have responded to each statement. *Every* statement *must* have a rating.

The Rating Scale runs from 1 to 10. Choose the number that best applies to each statement.

RATING SCALE	1-Almost Never	3-Seldom	5-Occasionally	7-Fairly Often	9-Very Frequently
	2-Rarely	4-Once in a While	6-Sometimes	8-Usually	10-Almost Always

When you have completed the LPI-Observer, please return it to:

_____

_____

Thank you.

Name of Leader: _____

I (the observer) am This Leader's (Check One): ☐ Manager ☐ Direct Report ☐ Co-Worker ☐ Other

To what extent does this leader engage in the following behaviors? Choose the response number that best applies to each statement and record it in the box to the right of that statement. He or She:

1.	Sets a personal example of what he/she expects of others.	
2.	Talks about future trends that will influence how our work gets done.	
3.	Seeks out challenging opportunities that test his/her own skills and abilities.	
4.	Develops cooperative relationships among the people he/she works with.	
5.	Praises people for a job well done.	
6.	Makes certain that people adhere to the principles and standards that have been agreed upon.	
7.	Describes a compelling image of what our future could be like.	
8.	Challenges people to try out new and innovative ways to do their work.	
9.	Actively listens to diverse points of view.	
10.	Makes it a point to let people know about his/her confidence in their abilities.	
11.	Follows through on the promises and commitments that he/she makes.	
12.	Appeals to others to share an exciting dream of the future.	
13.	Actively searches for innovative ways to improve what we do.	
14.	Treats others with dignity and respect.	
15.	Makes sure that people are creatively recognized for their contributions to the success of our projects.	
16.	Asks for feedback on how his/her actions affect other people's performance.	
17.	Shows others how their long-term interests can be realized by enlisting in a common vision.	
18.	Asks "What can we learn?" when things don't go as expected.	
19.	Involves people in the decisions that directly impact their job performance.	
20.	Publicly recognizes people who exemplify commitment to shared values.	
21.	Builds consensus around a common set of values for running our organization.	
22.	Paints the "big picture" of what we aspire to accomplish.	
23.	Identifies measurable milestones that keep projects moving forward.	
24.	Gives people a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work.	
25.	Tells stories of encouragement about the good work of others.	
26.	Is clear about his/her philosophy of leadership.	
27.	Speaks with genuine conviction about the higher meaning and purpose of our work.	
28.	Takes initiative in anticipating and responding to change.	
29.	Ensures that people grow in their jobs by learning new skills and developing themselves.	
30.	Gets personally involved in recognizing people and celebrating accomplishments.	

LPI: LEADERSHIP PRACTICES INVENTORY OBSERVER

APPENDIX M:

Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised

SHARED EDUCATION DECISIONS SURVEY - Revised ©

This survey is designed to obtain perceptions concerning involvement in shared decision making. For the following items, decisions common to the school setting are divided into 11 organizational areas. Using the key below, for each item please indicate by **CIRCLING** the appropriate response in each column:

1. how frequently you perceive you are involved in making each decision (**Actual** column) and
2. how frequently you would like to be involved in making each decision (**Desired** column).

For analysis purposes, it is important that you provide a response in both columns for every item. Except where indicated by the wording of a particular item, respond to each item as it applies only to a building-level decision.

KEY: 1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, 5=Usually, 6=Always

	ACTUAL						DESIRED					
	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	USUALLY	ALWAYS	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	USUALLY	ALWAYS
1. Designing change initiatives at the district level	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Designing change initiatives at the building level	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Developing a district philosophy statement	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Developing a school philosophy statement	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Setting district-level goals	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Setting building-level goals	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Planning long-term district-level educational improvements	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Planning long-term building-level educational improvements	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. Planning short-term district-level educational improvements	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. Planning short-term building-level educational improvements	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. Determining who will be involved in district-wide change initiatives	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. Determining who will be involved in school-wide change initiatives	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Policy												
13. Setting guidelines for homework	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. Setting guidelines for student conduct, discipline	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Determining guidelines for student retention	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. Establishing student attendance policies	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. Establishing academic eligibility policies for student participation in extracurricular activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6

	ACTUAL						DESIRED					
	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	USUALLY	ALWAYS	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	USUALLY	ALWAYS
18. Setting guidelines for evaluation of administrators	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. Setting guidelines for evaluation of teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. Setting guidelines for evaluation of educational support personnel	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Curriculum/Instruction												
21. Choosing content/program areas for curriculum development	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. Choosing content for inclusion in curriculum documents	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. Selecting textbooks	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. Selecting instructional materials	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. Determining changes in course offerings	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. Determining teaching methodologies	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. Determining new programs for inclusion in the curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. Designing new academic programs	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Student Achievement												
29. Determining district standards of excellence	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. Specifying grade-level or course-level student outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. Determining student grading practices	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. Determining strategies for optimizing time on task	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. Setting guidelines for student testing and assessment	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. Determining specific standardized tests and other forms of student assessment	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
35. Evaluating the alignment between textbooks, curriculum, and testing programs	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
36. Evaluating the alignment between teaching, testing, and staff development	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Pupil Personnel												
37. Determining student placement for instructional programs	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6

	ACTUAL						DESIRED					
	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	USUALLY	ALWAYS	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	USUALLY	ALWAYS
38. Determining recommended student class size	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
39. Determining methods of reporting student progress to parents	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
40. Helping to solve a student's academic problems	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
41. Helping to solve a student's personal problems	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
42. Choosing student support services administered by guidance	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
43. Determining pupils who are given commendations, awards, and scholarships	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Staff Personnel												
44. Hiring district administrators	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
45. Hiring building administrators	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
46. Hiring instructional personnel	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
47. Hiring educational support personnel	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
48. Selecting department heads	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
49. Orientating new personnel	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
50. Assigning teaching duties	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
51. Determining duty assignments	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
52. Granting tenure to administrators	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
53. Granting tenure to teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
54. Reducing staff	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
55. Assigning staff to committees	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
56. Planning agendas for staff meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
57. Resolving employee grievances	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
School/Community Relations												
58. Involving community/civic groups in school activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
59. Involving business groups in school activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6

	ACTUAL						DESIRED					
	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	USUALLY	ALWAYS	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	USUALLY	ALWAYS
60. Selecting community or business representatives for involvement in school committees	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
61. Determining content of school news released to the media	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
62. Determining the extent of influence citizen committees have over school decisions	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
63. Distributing outside resources within the school	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
64. Resolving difficulties with community/business groups	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Parental Involvement												
65. Selecting parents for involvement in school committees	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
66. Selecting parents for involvement in shared decision making committees or councils	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
67. Determining the amount of influence the PTA will have on school functioning	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
68. Setting agenda items for parent meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
69. Resolving parental complaints	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Staff Development												
70. Assigning staff to staff development committees	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
71. Carrying out staff development needs assessments	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
72. Designing staff development activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
73. Implementing staff development activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
74. Specifying staff development evaluation activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Budget												
75. Formulating the district-level budget	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
76. Formulating building-level budgets	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
77. Formulating department/grade-level budgets	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
78. Allocating monies for textbooks	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
79. Allocating monies for curriculum development	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
80. Allocating monies for plant decisions	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6

	ACTUAL						DESIRED					
	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	USUALLY	ALWAYS	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	USUALLY	ALWAYS
81. Managing the district-level budget	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
82. Managing the building-level budget	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
83. Managing department/grade-level budgets	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
84. Cutting monies from the district-level budget	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
85. Cutting monies from the building-level budget	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
86. Cutting monies from department/grade-level budgets	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Plant Management												
87. Determining priority use of school facilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
88. Determining the choice of capital projects	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
89. Determining the scheduling of capital projects	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
90. Determining priorities for facilities planning	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
91. Determining priorities for facilities maintenance	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
92. Determining busing schedules	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
93. Determining bus routes	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
94. Determining the number of buses utilized for student transportation	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
95. Determining the hours of the school schedule	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6

96. Write in your building code: _____

97. What is your role in relation to the school?

1 Administrator
2 Teacher
3 Support staff
4 Parent
5 Community member
6 School board member
7 Business representative
8 Student
9 Other (please specify):_____

98. For which level of the school are you completing this survey?

1 Pre-K
2 Elementary
3 Intermediate school
4 Middle school
5 Junior high school
6 High school
7 Junior-senior high school
8 K-12
9 Other (please specify):_____

3 Linda Lane
Hampton Bays, NY 11946
ferrara@optonline.net
516-728-5566

APPENDIX N:

Demographic Information of Participants

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questions are being asked to aid in the research and will **only** be used when correlating data. No recording of any identifying personal information will be used

1. What is your gender?

   Male

   Female

2. To which ethnic/cultural background do you most identify?

   Asian

   Black/African

   Caucasian

   Hispanic/Latino

   Native American

   Pacific Islander

   Mixed Race

   Other

3. In which RESA district do you work?

   Coastal Plains

   Okefenokee

4. Please circle the level at which you are currently a teacher.

   MiddleSchool

   High School

5. How long have you been a teacher?

   Less than 10 years

   11-15 years

   16-20 years

   21-25 years

   More than 25 years

6. How long have you been in your current school?

   Less than 10 years

   11-15 years

   16-20 years

   21-25 years

   More than 25 years

7. Which most closely represents your highest educational level attained?

   Bachelor's Degree

   Master's Degree

   Education Specialist Degree (EdS)

   Doctorate Degree (EdD, PhD)

   Other (please specify) _____

8. Have you had an opportunity to participate in shared decision making groups?

   Yes

   No